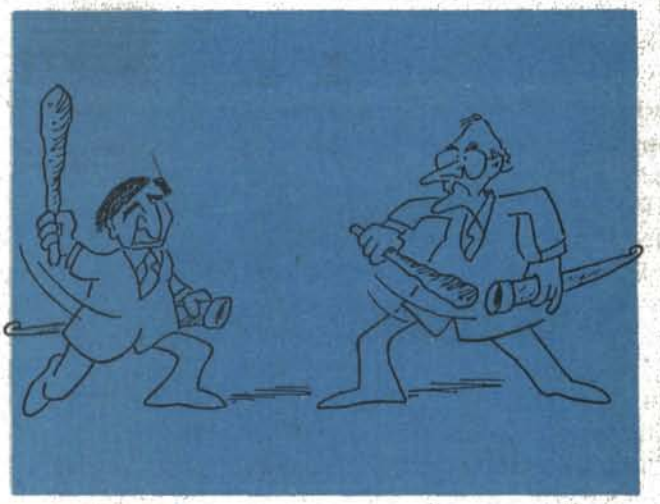
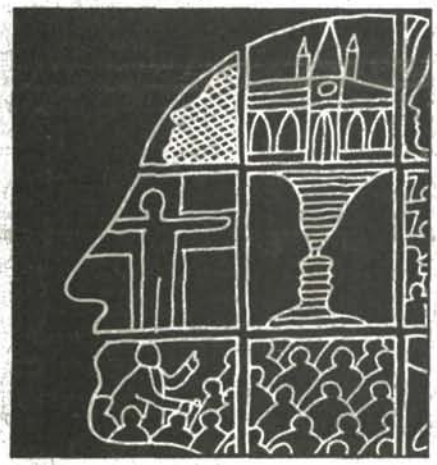
$1.50 October 7, 1988

COMMONWEAL

COMPETING ELITES
ELECTION '88
Fred Siegel



BOOKS:
Muriel Spark
The Parish
Family Violence
Christian Socialism



INDIA:
CONSUMING
WHAT MUST BE CONSERVED
Douglas Stevens

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CORRESPONDENCE Killing or allowing to die?

AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Cost-benefit decisions

New Orleans, La.

To the Editors: I take it to be the main point of Daniel Callahan's essay ("Vital Distinctions, Moral Questions," July 15) that our society should not unreservedly commit its public resources to providing medical patients with everything technology has and will have to offer as effective means for preserving life. The point is a morally valid and socially important one. Public resources are limited. There are many other legitimate and urgent demands upon them.

What Callahan warns us about does not seem to be a matter of general concern, much less political agitation. What is likely to have hindered its reception by our society?

Not, I think, what Callahan supposes. Callahan is persuaded that the American public is as committed to preserving life as it is to refraining from taking it, because it cannot quite manage, morally speaking, to grasp the difference.

I find this explanation implausible. The logical outcome of such thinking would be public policies as earnest and energetic about preventing death as about avoiding homicide. Such a mentality would have no more reason to manifest itself in providing life-sustaining technology to patients in hospitals than in being equally lavish with other ordinary means of keeping people alive. Preventive medicine would have at least as strong a claim. So would all sorts of measures to avert deaths caused by exposure, malnutrition, toxification of the environment, felonies, and fires. But look almost anywhere in our society, except where Callahan is looking, and letting people die on the basis of cost-benefit analysis in public spending is practically habitual.

Yet Callahan's proposal will, I imagine, encounter resistance and suspicion. It points the way to a time when being kept alive by American medicine will constitute one more of the privileges of the wealthy. And given current sensitivities to the widening gap between rich and poor, such are likely to be angry reflections.

Given the monopoly of medicine in our economy it will, I think, be difficult to persuade the public that funding restrictions of the kind Callahan recommends represents a step that ought to be taken before the taking of other, more fundamental steps towards a just distribution of medical resources. Increasingly, the average American's habitual attitude towards the medical profession is one of moral indignation, and that is an unpropitious mood for hearing recommendations of what sounds like self-denial, even when they are as sensible and potentially beneficial to society as I believe Callahan's to be.

JAMES GAFFNEY

Religion vs. Mill

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: In "Vital Distinctions, Mortal Questions" [July 15], Daniel Callahan continues to feel and think his way through the questions that prompted his recent and controversial book, *Setting Limits*. As one who has been critical of that book, I welcome Mr. Callahan's probings toward greater clarity. He is undoubtedly right in believing that the discussion in which he is engaged has intensified and will become even more painfully intense in the years ahead. I also have no doubt that his voice will continue to be important in that discussion.

There are several concerns that I believe he and his readers might well ponder. There is a difference between moral and medical judgment. "Whose life is worth living," he says, is a moral judgment, whereas what constitutes "meaningful personal life" is in the category of the medical. Permit me to suggest that a "vital distinction" is missing here. In arguing against euthanasia, he says the "religious" argument that life belongs to God is not publicly persuasive. He proposes in its place John Stuart Mill's proscription against a person's abdication of liberty. More persuasive is an ethic of communal responsibility, which significantly recasts the entire discussion of, for example, patients' "rights." Pragmatically, the appeal to Mill's dubious theory is likely to be less politically effective in our society than an acknowledgment of transcendent authority and communal responsibility.

Mr. Callahan writes of a "conflation of the allocation and euthanasia issues." He will perhaps forgive me if I suggest that he is in part responsible for that confusing conflation. A vital distinction between the two issues should be made as sharply as possible, while acknowledg-

(Continued on page 541)

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters should not exceed 250 words and are subject to editing for clarity and space limitations.

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COMMONWEAL

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Half a loaf . . .

There has always been a Polish crisis and there will always be one. The sense of exasperation expressed in that line colors the West's understanding of Polish history and politics—and for understandable reasons. Geography, internal crisis, economic underdevelopment, ethnic dissension, the ambitions of larger and more powerful neighbors have all colluded to make the Polish national existence repetitively precarious (Yogi Berra: "It's *déjà vu* all over again"). Even in its most nearly autonomous moments, Poland's internal political life has often been heavily conditioned by the exigencies of relations with Germany and/or Russia.

But there is another way to look at this history. In assessing the 1980 compromise between the government and Solidarity, Neal Ascherson deftly sums up an alternative interpretation: "[T]he nation and its leaders had never pushed any confrontation to its logical extreme. This inner tolerance, which had made Poland such a mature society in comparison to Germany or Russia, had led to a history of half-measures, of belligerent words and symbols accompanied by only hesitant deeds. The nation had suffered for this, but because of this it had also survived" (*The Struggles for Poland*, Random House).

A year later, on December 13, 1981, the government declared martial law and suppressed Solidarity. But it didn't take. Solidarity has survived—proof in itself of the government's preference for half-measures. The strikes of this past spring and late summer, and the continuing challenge by the Polish people to the government's very legitimacy, are also proof that General Jaruzelski has failed to relieve Poland's economic problems—things are getting worse not better—and has thereby lost whatever authority he gained in 1981 by seeming to stave off Russian military intervention.

In 1988, the situation has changed. Mikhail Gorbachev's public show of support for Jaruzelski notwithstanding, Russian intervention is highly unlikely: the Soviet press has accused the Polish government of mismanaging the economy and urged compromise with Solidarity. Another form of Soviet intervention? A sign of the General's imminent departure? Perhaps. But perhaps a signal to Soviet bloc governments that their domestic conflicts are their own business and their own responsibility. Without the Soviet big stick, however, that spirit of "inner tolerance," which Ascherson sees as a focal element in Polish politics, will be deeply and sharply tested.

In agreeing to begin talks with the government in October, Lech Walesa, the leader of Solidarity, faces his own test—on two fronts: with General Czeslaw Kiszczak representing the government and with the miners and shipyard workers of Solidarity who have been both backbone and flashpoint of the movement. Though the government is likely to balk at political measures that would threaten the

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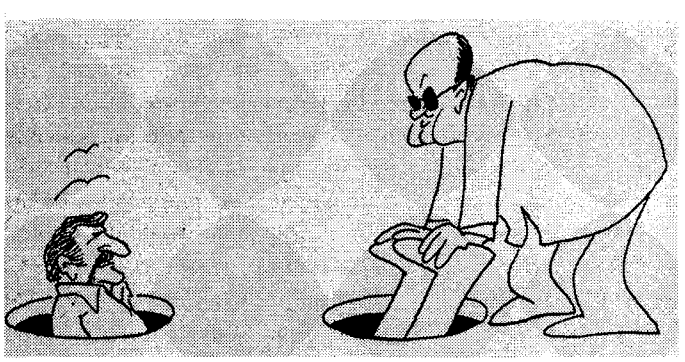
hegemony of the Communist party, it is the workers who may be Walesa's more formidable challenge. They certainly do not trust the government and their initial refusal to follow Walesa in ending the strikes indicates as well their distrust of him simply for agreeing to talk with the government before securing recognition and legalization of Solidarity.

It is the young, including many of these workers, who are paying the highest price for Poland's abysmal economic performance. Even the relatively higher wages of miners and shipyard workers are not enough to buy scarce goods. The country's enormous foreign debt—much of it left from the Giereck years—and the IMF-imposed austerity measures soak up hard currency that should be going to capital investment and to retooling Poland's aging industrial base. Overinvestment in prefabricated housing and poor site planning a decade ago have created a critical shortage of new apartments and houses. Adequate housing, even for rental, is beyond the means of the average worker; the wait for new housing units is now calculated to be fifty years. Married couples must live apart and put off starting families because they cannot find a place to live together. In this economy the most basic human needs and rights are violated.

What is alarming about the present situation is that because of past economic mistakes any political compromise between Solidarity and the government will have to weather continuing austerity measures before the fruits of cooperation can be harvested. The bottom line: these young workers, even after all this struggle, are unlikely to have decent housing any time soon.

Lech Walesa has been called a violent (read: fiery) defender of moderation. His efforts to end the strikes and to begin talks should be judged in that light. To his critics in Solidarity, he replies, "I am not naive. I am not making life easy for myself. I am not doing it for myself; I am doing it for you." He sees the present moment as a "chance, for the first time in Poland, to talk seriously about what can and should be done." Though many question his tactics, no one has seriously challenged his leadership—for the moment.

It can hardly be in anyone's interest to continue the present political and economic impasse in Poland, not the people's, not Solidarity's, and certainly not government leaders'. With the Soviet government preoccupied by its own reforms, with Western groups and nations prepared to help with debt reduction, and with the prodigious patience of the Polish people, perhaps Walesa is right, there is now "a chance to let Poland be Poland."



In that task Poland's history of "inner tolerance" is both a curse and a blessing. "Half measures" and "hesitant deeds" are a curse in an economy where decisive and concerted action must be taken to dissolve the administrative and financial sludge that impedes the production of both new entrepreneurial efforts and established state enterprises. Real economic change inevitably challenges party apparatchiks (part of the sludge factor) and current political arrangements. And it is on the political front that the capacity for compromise may serve the long-run interests of Poland. It is important that Mr. Walesa and General Kiszczak get it right this time.

TEN YEARS, TWO DIRECTIONS

October 16 is the tenth anniversary of the election of Karol Wojtyla as bishop of Rome. These ten years have had both their inspiring and disquieting moments, marked always by John Paul II's powerful intellect, personal courage, immense energy, and the sharp contrasts in his character. He has overcome an attack on his life, traveled the world, and deeply affected the development of the Catholic church. His deeds have engaged the imaginations of Catholics and non-Catholics alike; his words have consistently challenged our minds and hearts.

This is most apparent in two distinctive areas: in his outreach and outspokenness on behalf of the world's poor; and in his ambivalent approach to reform and renewal in the church. His appeal for and to the poor seems to spring from his deep compassion and his sense of the singularity of each human person; his ambivalence in church affairs seems to stem from a personal desire for clarity and commitment that overemphasizes conformity.

The power of John Paul's social concerns has been etched in our consciences, particularly through his travels to the underdeveloped world and by the publication of his two social encyclicals, *Laborem exercens* (1981) and *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (1987). Last month, both facets of this achievement were shown at the same time. John Paul visited southern Africa. There he praised the region's efforts at self-development and called for the developed nations to offer greater assistance. In Mozambique, seeing the deadly effects of civil war, he was moved by "the intensity of the suffering lived by this nation."

Simultaneously, at UN Headquarters in New York, members of that world body met to discuss his recent encyclical, *Sollicitudo*. Sponsored by the Vatican Mission to the UN, the gathering included Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar; president of the Pontifical Justice and Peace Commission, Cardinal Roger Etchegaray; and ambassadors from seven nations representing the world's major regions, religions, blocs, and stages of development. Cardinal Etchegaray delivered a

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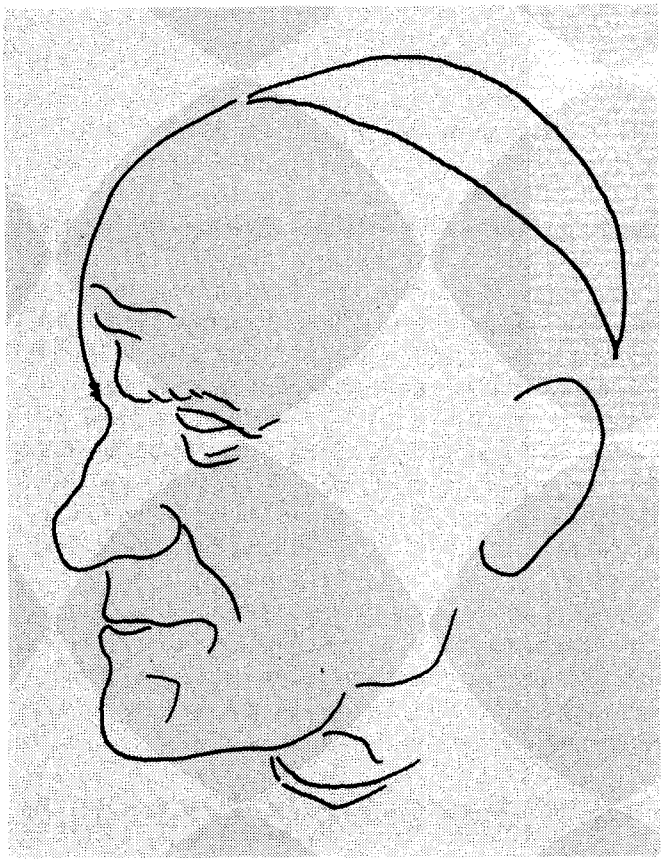

spirited presentation of the encyclical, drawing special attention to its "guidelines for development" (those dealing especially with reform of the international trade system and the world's monetary and financial systems), guidelines that, the cardinal noted, have received too little attention.

The encyclical's most vocal critic at the seminar was Herbert S. Okun, deputy U.S. representative to the UN. While Okun praised the "vigor, force, and eloquence" of the letter, he took exception to the pope's pessimistic assessment of third-world development, to his conclusions concerning the negative effects of the cold war, and to his apparent "moral equivalency" in comparing the Eastern and Western blocs.

The encyclicals and the journeys indicate the pope's ability and readiness to challenge those who wield power and bear the greatest responsibility for the state of the world. In Paraguay earlier this year he told the country's dictator, Gen. Alfredo Stroessner, that human rights are "not a matter of political convenience." Later, in Bolivia, he instructed a massive gathering that they must *all* fight drug trafficking as a matter of Christian duty. These stands challenge us all.

On the other hand, an incident that took place at the same time on a different continent, though minor in comparison, illustrates the pope's conflicting stands. In their enthusiasm for John Paul's *Sollicitudo*, several members of the U.S. chapter of PEN wanted to invite the pope to join their society. The novelist Maureen Howard, a Catholic, had to remind them that his attitude toward dissent was not in accord with PEN's principles of freedom of speech. Ms. Howard was quick to point out the humor of her situation—"the idea of a little old Catholic girl saying 'No, the pope can't join our club.'"

For better and for worse, not a few Catholics today find themselves in the same situation. Like Ms. Howard, they take their responsibilities seriously; in words Archbishop Rembert Weakland addressed to the pope last year in Los Angeles, they "are more inclined to look at the intrinsic worth of an argument proposed by the teachers in the church than to accept it on the basis of the authority itself...." Such people are a mark of the church's growing maturity. But, by definition, they are a rebuke to any false sense of authority.

In contrast to his challenging and compassionate deeds in the world, John Paul sends out conflicting signals on many church issues. Welcome words and gestures are often followed by instances of distressing insensitivity. Women are told that they have equal dignity, but can only be admitted to secondary levels of ministry. Collegiality and subsidiarity are commended, but decision making is increasingly centralized: episcopal appointments, for example, are too often made without consultation of local bishops and without consideration of local church needs. Jews are welcomed and heard, but promised efforts for improved relations fail to materialize. Homosexuals are assured they must be respected, while a Vatican document seems to excuse violence against them.

In individual cases, the pope himself may be at the mercy of Vatican bureaucracies and entrenched custom; he is reported to be a less-than-able administrator (the *Financial Times* of London, in a lengthy analysis, describes the recent reform of the Roman curia as a "damp squib, offering only minor and cosmetic changes"). And these *are* difficult times of unsettling change.

Nonetheless, it is clear that the pope has set the tenor of his papacy in both its defense of human dignity in the socio-economic-political realm and its tightening of the reins in ecclesiastical matters. He has set a double course for the church, and it is an assignment that at least does not allow for complacency. But this double and sometimes discordant course increasingly threatens to drive the church decisively into a narrow, defensive understanding of its mission. As we pray for the pope on this anniversary, we hope the church can continue to live with Karol Wojtyla's two orientations.

UNDERMINING ARIAS?

Since his election in 1986, Costa Rican president Oscar Arias Sanchez has walked a tight rope: positioning himself as an ally of the United States, without being—in fact or in reputation—a yes man. The success with which Arias has maintained his balance has enabled him to emerge as a distinctive Central American leader. One of his strong points, however—his ability to deal with competing parties in dispute—has also led to persistent tensions between Costa Rica and the U.S., beginning with Arias's refusal to give asylum to the fleeing Ferdi-

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nand Marcos and going on to his closing a clandestine airstrip built to supply the Nicaraguan *contras*.

Thirteen months ago, when Arias initiated the peace plan known in Central America as the Esquipulas II Accord and signed by Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Guatemala, the U.S. withheld its support. Nor did we join fully in the international acclaim for Arias's Nobel Peace Prize. Official U.S. reaction to Arias's peace plan was critical; because there was no way to force compliance, we declared the plan naive. This criticism was repeated when talks between the Nicaraguan government and the *contras* broke down completely in June.

Why such a negative reaction? Arias's methods run counter to U.S. policy. He is willing to strike compromises with the Sandinistas, whom the Reagan administration has tried consistently to oust; he refuses to call for sanctions against Nicaragua or to aid the *contras* by allowing Costa Rica to serve as a base for their operation. The Arias plan specifically prohibits outside intervention in the region, thereby challenging U.S. support of the *contras*. "He won the [Nobel] prize for defunding the *contras* and taking an anti-American stance," is the view of one top State Department official (*New York Times*, August 7, 1988).

Never mind that Arias has voiced disappointment and even criticism of Sandinista restrictions on human rights and political freedoms, and that the limitations on outside intervention are also directed at the Soviets.

The fact is that on its first anniversary, the Arias peace plan has proved a partial success. The process has achieved a regional cease-fire (though civil strife continues in Guatemala and El Salvador). It was also responsible for initial negotiations in Nicaragua, which broke down when the Sandinistas jailed domestic opponents during June and July. Arias then turned to Fidel Castro, asking him to persuade Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega to return to the bargaining table. Castro did, and momentum seems to be picking up again. Peace talks between the guerrillas and Nicaraguan officials have resumed, tentatively, and a five-nation summit meeting is scheduled for mid-November.

As the peace process seems to be regaining momentum, recent reports of escalating tension between Costa Rica and the U.S. deserve careful scrutiny. There seems to us a cumulative weight in the following U.S.-sponsored actions: the Costa Rican ambassador to the U.S. had to be replaced when a Congressman complained that the ambassador was lobbying against U.S. military aid to the *contras*; pressures were exerted by the U.S. until Arias confidant John Biehl was dismissed from his post in the UN Development Program, also for lobbying against *contra* aid; U.S. officials assisted in the arrest of an Arias supporter charged with laundering drug money. While the U.S. was acting within its rights, the timing and pressure in each of these instances raise troubling questions.

Are these actions calculated assaults by the U.S. aimed at undermining the Costa Rican president? Are they the normal expressions of political disfavor used by the Reagan administration in the face of Arias's refusals to join its anti-Sandinista campaign? Are they based upon justified grievances? Does it make any difference?

The Reagan administration is giving the appearance of trying to undermine Arias and derail an important official effort at joint peacemaking in Central America. Other U.S. actions seem to be undercutting Arias's domestic policies and the health of the Costa Rican economy. Loyola University's James Fuerst, who knows Arias and has interviewed Biehl at length, reported to us several such practices: U.S. AID money is channeled through private banks in direct competition with Costa Rica's centralized banking system, impeding the government's access to and control of the funds; U.S. funding agencies favor private business and promote private enterprise over the cooperatives encouraged by the Costa Rican government; and, finally, U.S. "humanitarian" aid has been spent—under the auspices of various front groups—on costly, full-page, anti-Sandinista ads in *La Nacion*, contesting the regional peace efforts of Arias and the other signers of the accord.

The Arias plan has yet to achieve a permanent peace in the region, but neither have our unilateral interventions. It is a tragedy for the region and short-sighted for the U.S. to undermine—wittingly or not—the region's most stable democracy and its most able political leader.

ET CETERA

SCORSESE: LAST VISITATION Mary Pat Kelly, who interviewed Martin Scorsese in these pages (*Commonweal*, September 9, 1988), reports on the reception of *The Last Temptation of Christ* at the Venice Film Festival:

The day *The Last Temptation* had its premiere, I sat in on an interview with Martin Scorsese and four journalists—from France, the Netherlands, Italy, and Finland. The four journalists were well-known critics and European intellectuals of the kind for whom serious discussion of traditional religious belief is, by definition, either right-wing or embarrassing. As Scorsese began to speak very simply about his faith and the struggle to make the film, they clearly didn't believe he was serious. They were waiting for him to deconstruct himself, as it were. Instead he insisted upon his personal connection to the story of Jesus. For him Judas represented Everyman. "For me," he said, "Everyman is a New Yorker,"—thus the streetwise performance of Harvey Keitel. As he spoke, the journalists lost their reserve. The Finnish woman acknowledged that she'd had very little religious background and found herself looking at what she had assumed was a bankrupt myth in a new way. The Dutch reporter asked how the Catholic Scorsese and the Dutch Reformed, Paul Schrader, the screenwriter, were able to find common ground. From his own experience he found that remarkable.

Unexpectedly the interview became an occasion for personal religious testimony. And, indeed, when the reviews

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appeared the next morning, the critics treated the film as a serious work of art.

That night at the official, midnight, premiere, an elegantly dressed audience would applaud the actors and cheer the filmmakers. But an even more eloquent tribute came from my fellow moviegoers at the 1:40 A.M. showing, added to take the overflow—in other words, real devotees— from the midnight show. When we left the Palace of Cinema in the near-dawn, nobody went home. Like the journalists, the paparazzi, the movie stars, and even the waiters at the Excelsior Hotel, we did what everyone seemed to be doing during the festival. We stood around talking about Jesus.

'FREEDOM OR DEATH'

THE HAITIAN TRAGEDY

U.S. RESPONSIBILITY

The swiftness with which Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy was removed by a *coup d'état* may signal something new in Haiti. Both the United States government and the Haitian military establishment must have realized that Haitians had reached the point where their persistent cries for freedom could become "Freedom or death."

A number of things rush together as I write this. On Friday, September 16, I exited class at St. Mary's in peaceful Notre Dame, Indiana. Words from Peter Berger's *Rumor of Angels* echoed in my head as my plane landed in Washington, D.C. There are certain deeds that cry out to heaven. These deeds are not only an outrage to our moral sense, they seem to violate a fundamental awareness of the constitution of our humanity. In this way, these deeds are not only evil, but monstrously evil. Berger's point: that some deeds were beyond moral relativizing and temporizing.

I carried those words with me as I joined others who had come together at Missionhurst under the auspices of the Washington Office on Haiti and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men for a working conference: "The Crisis in Haiti: Towards an Effective Response."

Even as we met, a glimpse of the monstrous evil called "the political-economic situation in Haiti" had begun to show itself on TV: the attacks on worshipers at the church of St. Jean Bosco on September 11; military men who stood aside while thirteen were killed and scores wounded; five Haitian doctors reporting the plight of a woman, seven-and-a-half months pregnant, whose stab wounds reached the infant she carried; three people justifying their attack on the church by announcing that the parish priest—Jean-Bertrand Aristide—was getting what he preached.

My Washington conference ended on September 18. We parted with the news that Brig. Gen. Prosper Avril, a former military advisor for the Duvalier dictatorship, had declared himself president of Haiti. The response of the U.S. government had been to authorize the coup. The newspapers, of course, do not say this. They are not quite so blunt. Associated Press simply reported what Anita Stockman, State Department spokesperson announced: that Avril phoned the U.S. ambassador and said he was assuming the presidency.

The fact of the matter is that a nontemporizing, nonrelativizing condemnation of the evil violating the Haitian people in their struggle for freedom has to reach beyond Lt. Gen. Namphy, and beyond the succession of military personalities who, no doubt, will endlessly replace him. It has to reach into the U.S. itself. For, in addition to the corrupt, power-grabbing ineptitude of today's ruling Haitians, the unrestrained ravages of the Tontons Macoute, and the apathy of Haiti's wealthy, it is our policies, especially U.S. economic development policy, that need to be condemned.

The U.S. tools the key for opening the door to Haitian economic development and all the possibilities for social and political life that that entails. The military are the protectors of the Haitian status quo and of our current policy. The social and political situation this fashions creates émigrés and people whose human rights are violated. Every effort the Haitians make to meet their basic and fundamental human needs is seen as a challenge to the economic life that is imposed on them.

Haiti is hopeless in being able to resist the absolute supremacy of the U.S. over its economic life. We can well do without Haiti, but 85 percent of Haitian economic exchanges are with us. The U.S. has the dominant hand in the making of Haitian economic policy.

It is not the good intentions of U.S. AID policymakers that need to be judged. It is the policy itself. AID economic development policy is built on the notion that Haiti will develop economically through export-oriented growth. Haiti's comparative advantage in a free-trade world is its abundance of cheap labor. There must be, as AID policy sees it, disincentives for domestic food production (PL 480 Program). The rubric that explains the disincentives argues that Haiti's food security will be insured, more cheaply, through import of food from the U.S. Haiti thus becomes a country whose economic development is tied to assembly-type industries and agricultural exports limited to coffee and, perhaps, a few winter vegetables for the U.S. market.

The domestic outcome of this policy is the suppression of unions in order to maintain Haiti's comparative advantage in cheap labor, systematic harassment of peasant and rural associations, and suppression of any manifestations of self-determination by the Haitian people.

What Haiti needs is assistance to its grassroots groups and associations that are trying to make the route to economic development pass through the rural population of Haiti with the hope that local resources might be restored to meet the basic and essential needs of its population.

There is, to be clear about it, very little real investment and development in the Haitian economy today. Some $70 million in U.S. aid has been suspended since last November's elec-

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tion-day violence; Haiti's treasury is almost bare. U.S. policy for Haiti is fundamentally aimed at stability and the appearance of peace. The military aid and riot control gear we sent to Namphy to protect his government against a coup, and the people against the Macoute, were turned against the voters last November.

U.S. policy leads at worst, to the slow death of Haiti. At best, it continues the urbanization of its poverty, the emigration of its people, and the silencing of self-determination. Haiti needs something better from the United States: solidarity with its suffering and struggle for freedom. JOHN E. KEEGAN

John E. Keegan, M.M. is a visiting professor at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, and is a professor of theology and Christian ethics at Maryknoll School of Theology, Maryknoll, New York.

OF SEVERAL MINDS Abigail McCarthy

GLOBAL PERIL, LOCAL ACTION

ORGANIZING FOR AN AQUIFER

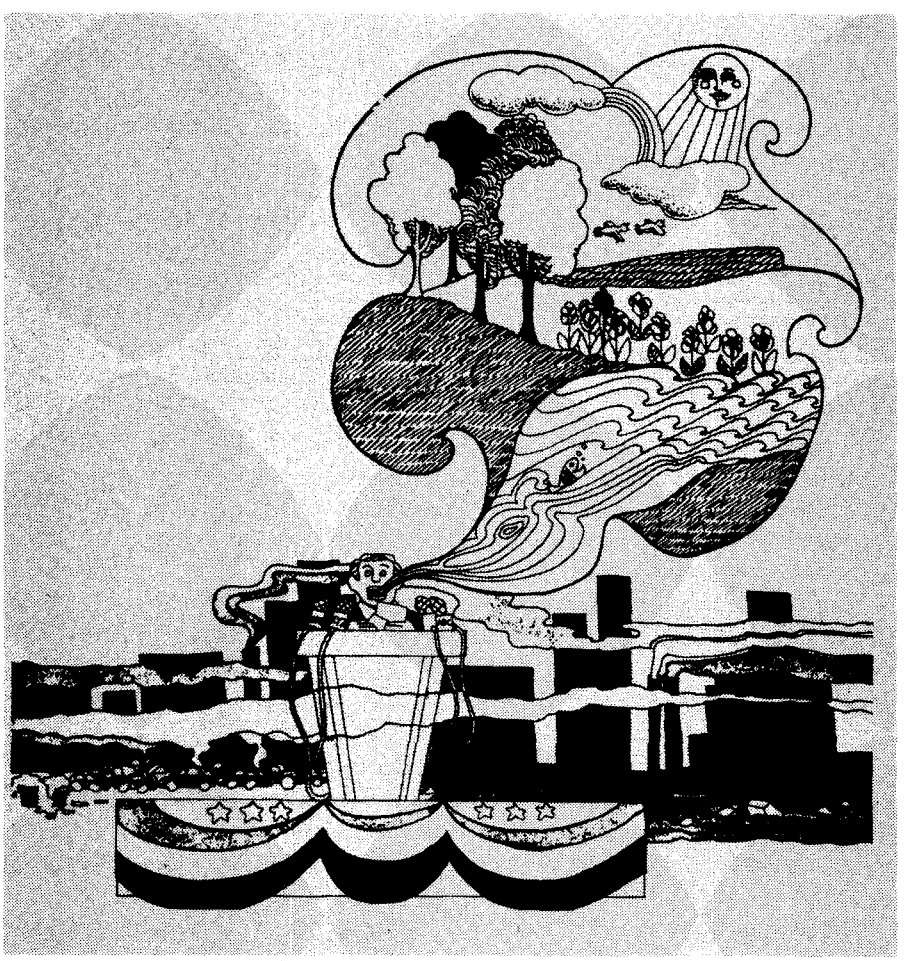
I think it was Russell Baker who wrote years ago that the greatest obstacle to environmental reform was the adaptive nature of humankind. We adjust, we adapt to conditions even when they are hostile to our health and well-being. As a nation we have been almost passive as we watched without really seeing the reckless exploitation of natural resources and the advancing despoliation of the environment. But this last summer we began to wake up to our danger.

It was a summer of nightmares come true. Seemingly far-off threats became realities; large areas of our once beautiful country became almost unlivable. A stalled jet stream united with the greenhouse effect sent temperatures soaring to unprecedented heights and made mockery of the term "the temperate zone." Humidity and pollution combined to make the air in our cities perilous to breathe. Drought cracked the farmlands and our crops withered and died. Our mightiest river dried to a trickle. Ocean beaches were sealed off because of medical and human waste in the water and on the shore. Great Lakes' swimmers reported wading through litter and emerging from the water coated with sticky residue. We were warned against eating fish drawn from infected waters.

In addition to all this, in the face of widespread fire and flood, we came alive to the global nature of our peril—that we all suffer, for instance, from the extensive attack on our forests and the consequent disappearance of life-giving trees. Acid rain in the Appalachians and the Black Forest, record-breaking fires in the Rockies, the torching of the rain forest in Brazil, clear-cutting in the Cascades, the Smokies, and the mountain slopes of Nepal—all take their toll and have almost reached the point of no return.

Time called our response to all this an outbreak of ecophobia, but our alarm is not a phobia—it is an answer to real and present danger. We are at last agreed that something must be done. But what? Individual efforts seem puny in confronting a problem grown so great.

There is some ground for hope in the slow and ponderous efforts being made by governments. Canada continues to



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pressure our government on acid rain. Affected industrial nations have organized to agree on ways to reduce the threat to the ozone layer. Congress has set the Environmental Protection Agency to preparing two reports—the first to describe and define the greenhouse effect and the second to estimate the possibilities of restraining and stabilizing the accumulation of the gases that cause it. Presumably the next administration and the next Congress will take some action. I hope it is not too little and not too late.

But there is more immediate hope in the collective efforts of people to cope with their local and regional problems—if only because they bear witness to the ability of human beings to cooperate with each other on rational solutions to their problems and because their doing so is an example and stimulus to governmental bodies. One of the most promising of these efforts is under way to save Cape Cod, and it is promising largely because of the leadership of former U.S. Senator Paul Tsongas.

The Cape—that lovely narrow spit of land that reaches from New England into the sea—has been seriously affected by unplanned hit-and-miss development endangering its water supply. The Cape has what is called a sole-source aquifer—ground water. There are no rivers or streams to supplement its wells. Nor is there any access to the reservoirs of a large region should the wells run dry. Moreover, it is not only a *sole*-source aquifer but also a *single*-source one. If this source is contaminated or destroyed it will be so for the whole of the Cape, from the canal separating it from the mainland to Provincetown at its tip.

The idea of a limited moratorium on construction on the Cape was suggested in the draft report of the governor's commission on the environment which was chaired by Tsongas. Public approval of the idea was almost startling. A scientific poll by the *Boston Globe* showed 67 percent in favor, and a sampling of reader opinion by the *Cape Cod Times* and the *Cape Cod Business Journal* showed 72 and 80 percent respectively. A nonbinding referendum will be on the ballot in November.

Key to Tsongas's plan is the selection of four model towns which will examine the impact of development on their environment and quality of life and seek ways to plan and control it. This will be done with the help of the MIT graduate school for urban planning. Senator Tsongas has begun to raise money for this help, and his law firm is providing pro bono legal services. The total effort will be under the supervision of the Cape Cod Planning Commission, and a coalition is working on the formation of a political action committee. Elected officials, Tsongas says, have been bystanders as overdevelopment went on. "The idea is to send them a political message." And to show them what can be done.

All plans to limit growth are criticized as elitist and inimical to local industry. On the Cape the building industry is at the heart of the problem, but Tsongas distinguishes between local and off-Cape builders. "It's the off-Cape builder who wants to do the huge shopping centers and condominium developments that I would like to stop. The local builder who lives here and raises his family here will become an ally of the moratorium." There is no doubt that part of the support for the moratorium comes from property owners who see the value of their property rising if building slows. Tsongas points out, however, that the alternative is not to do anything, "to build the Cape like Coney Island," and make it unlivable. Planning, he insists, will allow for affordable housing for Cape residents and for camp sites and access to the beaches for those who love the Cape as visitors.

Such well-planned and reasoned efforts to control the environment can have widespread and widening effect, like thrown pebbles sending rippling circles across a pool. "Already," says Tsongas, "I've had inquiries from communities in the Berkshires." Eventually the ripples could spread across America. □

OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

IT'S MY PARTY

AND I'LL CRY IF I WANT TO

The archbishop of Hartford, Connecticut, John F. Whealon, announced recently that he was "unable in conscience to remain a registered Democrat" because of what he sees as that party's pro-abortion stance.

"I believe the Democratic party is officially in favor of executing unborn babies whose only crime is that they temporarily occupy their mother's womb," said Whealon in a column he wrote for the archdiocesan weekly newspaper.

"In my childhood home, God and Jesus Christ were first, the Catholic church second, and the Democratic party was third," he wrote. He said that American Catholicism and the Democratic party had been linked historically by "ethnicity, social class issues, and shared morality." But no more. "That link has been severed," he said. "By its repeated stances in favor of abortion, the Democratic party has abandoned the Catholic church."

Before commenting on the archbishop's remarks, I ought to reveal my biases—or should I say, my predicament? Not only am I a Democrat and a Catholic, but I am currently running as a Democrat for re-election to the Rhode Island Senate. Worse still, I am a leading contender to be the next majority leader of the state senate, a position that would make me one of the top half-dozen Democrats in the state.

So you see, this would be a singularly inconvenient moment for me to see the light and announce that, agreeing with Whealon, I have decided to sever my ties with the Democratic party. If the archbishop is correct in his judgment, I'd like to feel that I have the intellectual

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honesty and moral courage to admit he's correct. But of course I don't. I have a certain amount of honesty and courage, enough to carry me through the average day in a more or less honorable manner—but not enough to lead me to renounce my party four weeks before the election. You won't be surprised, therefore, if I fail to conclude that I am under an obligation in conscience to do what the archbishop feels he is obliged to do.

I don't disagree with Archbishop Whealon when he says that the Democratic party is a pro-abortion party. At least I don't disagree with him if he confines that description to the *national* Democratic party. In fact, I said the same thing myself in an article I wrote for this magazine nearly five years ago ("The Dilemma of an Anti-abortion Democrat," November 18, 1983).

But political parties in America, unlike parties in many European countries, are not centralized. Indeed, there is a sense in which the Democratic party (in the singular) does not exist. There is a national Democratic party; there are fifty state Democratic parties; and there are thousands of local Democratic parties. Such unity as exists within and among these many parties is less the unity of an organism and more that of a collection of juxtaposed entities which happen to move in the same direction from time to time. The term "Democratic party," as Archbishop Whealon seems to be using it, is a name with little or no reality corresponding to it.

So the anti-abortion Democrat can remain a Democrat, soothing his or her conscience with an explanation that runs along these lines: "When I say I'm a Democrat, I mean I'm loyal (more or less) to my state and/or local Democratic party, not to the national Democratic party. At election time, I grant a strong presumption in favor of Democratic candidates for mayor and state legislature, but this presumption does not extend to Democratic candidates for president of the United States."

This local/national distinction seems in fact to have been made in recent times by many formerly true-blue Democrats, especially Catholics and white southerners. It goes without saying that the reason for the distinction has not been the national party's pro-abortion stance only; but surely the abortion issue has contributed to the loss of these two traditional constituencies in presidential elections.

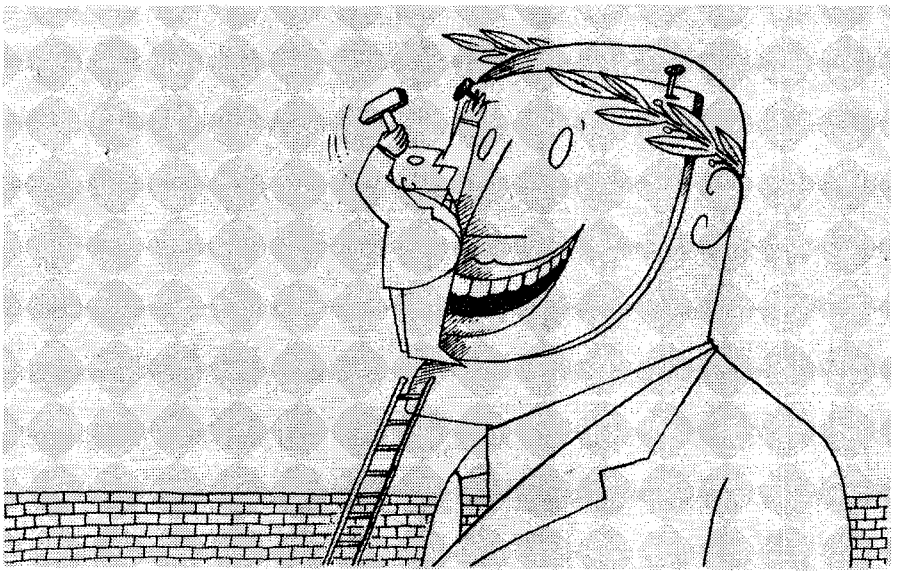
This distinction, I admit, smacks of hairsplitting, and it creates a psychologically unstable situation that cannot endure in the long run, a house divided that ultimately cannot stand. But it is a workable distinction in the short run, appropriate for those whose frame of mind may be expressed in words like these: "It's my party too, and I'll be damned if I'll let myself be run out of it."

One reason for remaining a party loyalist that the anti-abortion Democrat cannot give, however, is that the national Democrats, though wrong on abortion, are right on a long list of other issues: education, housing, race relations, military spending, foreign affairs, etc. If abortion is what the anti-abortion person says it is, namely, either homicide or probably homicide, then it is not just one more issue to be weighed in the balance against housing, education, and the rest. It is an issue of a totally different and far more compelling kind.

No one would say (at least no one would say this nowadays, though I'm sure quite a few Germans said it at the time) that Hitler's homicidal attitude toward Jews was balanced out by his road-building and high-employment programs. I don't mean for a minute to suggest that Dukakis is to be compared with Hitler, Democrats with Nazis, or abortion with genocide; for this would be absurd. But if abortion is a species of homicide, then, no matter how civilized, how well-intentioned, or how invincibly ignorant the proponents of abortion may be (and they usually are all three of these, especially the last), a pro-abortion stance on the part of a politician or a party is simply unacceptable.

These are brave words. But do I practice what I preach? I'm afraid not. Though convinced of the logic of the two paragraphs immediately above, I nonetheless continue to support state and local candidates who, in my view, are wrong on abortion yet right on other questions; and in November I'll vote for Michael Dukakis, the prochoice candidate, not George Bush, the prolife (and pro-Pledge of Allegiance) candidate.

Someday, perhaps, I'll develop enough consistency to act on my convictions and vote against otherwise acceptable prochoice Democrats. But when I contemplate that possibility, a feeling of vertigo sets in. Once I start down that slippery slope, I fear I may not be able to dig my heels in and stop before I have slid all the way downhill to Archbishop Whealon's position. And that, while not exactly a fate worse than death, is nonetheless a fate I am not yet ready to embrace. I was born a Democrat, and I hope to die a Democrat. But the pro-abortion stance of the national Democratic party isn't making this lifelong project easy to carry out. □



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ELECTION '88
COMPETING ELITES
THE DUKE & THE DAUPHIN

FRED SIEGEL

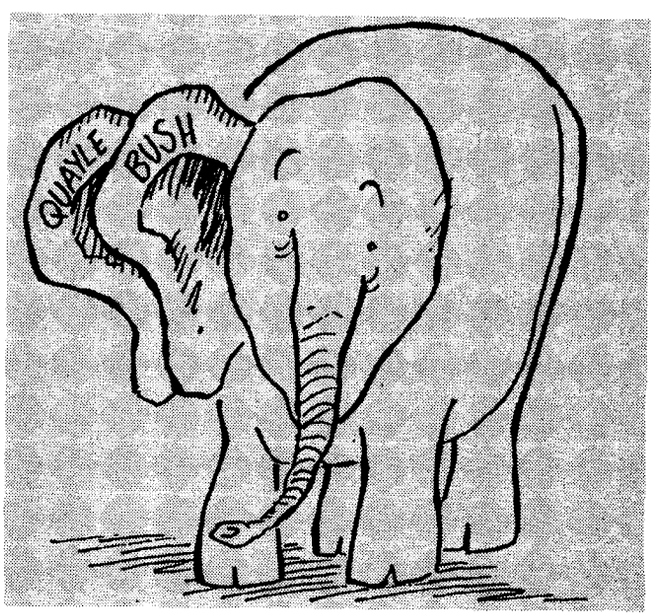
The great turnaround of 1988, George Bush's twenty-six point swing in the polls between late July and late August, has puzzled pundits and pollsters. In late July, TV commentators were musing not about whether Michael Dukakis would win, but by how much. The mood among conservatives in particular and Republicans in general was, in the words of a GOP operative, "morose." Conservatives began to discuss seriously the virtues of a Bush loss as a means of reviving their flagging movement. A month later the Duke's campaign was in such disarray as to invite advice columns from virtually every political journalist in the country.

Numerous explanations of varying merit have been offered for the great turnaround. Almost all involve the media. Either (a) the media's tough coverage of Dan Quayle was said to have produced a backlash; (b) the focus on Jesse Jackson's media-genic maneuverings that dominated the first three days of the Democratic convention was said to have had a delayed impact; (c) the media was said to have finally turned its attention to examining the truth behind the hype of the Massachusetts miracle; (d) Bush was given credit for running a brilliant Reagan-like media campaign; or finally (e) Bush had, appearances aside, suddenly become an effective demagogue. There is a bit of truth in all of these explanations. But they are not nearly sufficient to explain how a Republican campaign which had been so justifiably despondent recovered so quickly.

The presidency excepted, Bush's turnaround came despite the sad state of Republican party fortunes. For all of the talk over the past eight years of a Reagan-era realignment, Republican strength in Congress has actually declined from 193 congressmen in 1981 to 179 today. There are, notes analyst Kevin Phillips, actually fewer Republican governors, congressmen, and state legislators today than in 1969 when Nixon took office. On all but the presidential level the Republicans have never fully recovered from the drubbing they took in the Watergate election of 1974. Worse yet, savvy Republican strategists feared that a fluke Bush victory could send their representation even lower. They reasoned that if the 1990 midterm election took place shortly after the inevitable, and probably deep, postelection recession, the GOP would be even further diminished.

Conservative activists, never happy with the selection of George Bush, had other reasons to be gloomy this past summer as furious debate broke out over the lost opportunities of the Reagan years. The near total collapse of the Republican party over vast stretches of the country was one of the best kept secrets of the Reagan years. "The problem," says Republican campaigner Tom Thoren, "is that the party doesn't exist on the ground."

A confidential report prepared for Republican Chairman Frank Fahrenkopf found that Republicans were very weak or nonexistent in 2300 out of country's 3000 counties. They enjoyed strong organizations in only one hundred, largely suburban counties. In Oklahoma, for instance, the Republicans were unable even to put up candidates for the state senate in 40 percent of the races. In Massachusetts they were reduced to running plaintive newspaper ads in order to find candidates



FRED SIEGEL *of The Cooper Union is writing a book on American liberalism.*

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willing to run for the legislature. In Maryland, a state which had a thriving Republican party in the 1960s, the Democrats now control the governorship, both Senate seats, six of eight Congressional seats, and 125 out of 141 seats in the lower house of the state legislature.

While they have made substantial gains in Texas, Florida, and the Carolinas, Republicans, as an organized party, have almost disappeared over vast swatches of New England and the party is in precipitous decline in much of the Midwest. Why? A Michigan Republican county chairman has part of the answer. "Since I opened the party's leadership," he said, "most of the country club people no longer participate in party activities." George Bush appeared to be caught in the worst of both worlds. Not only had conservative activists alienated much of the party's up-scale, moderate base—the base on which George Bush himself had once depended—those same activists were openly hostile to Bush's "preppie pragmatism."

But then how did Bush rebound? The answer is that he exploited the weakness of an opposing party whose primary elections produced one of the weakest possible candidates for the general election. Dukakis, basking in the glory of a triumphant convention, coasted and Bush seized the opportunity to define the relatively unknown governor as a dangerously naive liberal ideologue.

Michael Dukakis has been mistakenly described as a technocrat. He is not. He is something related but different. He is a man of the Bar through and through. Well before George Bush went out of his way to make civil liberties un-American, Dukakis was describing himself as a "card-carrying member of the ACLU." A lawyer himself, Dukakis's key staffers are almost all lawyers. It's no wonder then that reporters are repeatedly struck by the similarity between the style of the Dukakis campaign operation and that of a well-run law firm. His tack on almost any issue from foreign policy: "A matter of international law," to the environment: "I will enforce the law," is expressed in legal terms. Americans have, as the Iran-*contra* affair made clear, a great and justified respect for law. But they also have a sense of the unruliness of the world, an awareness of the law's limits both at home and abroad, something Dukakis with his tidy formulas seems unaware of.

Dukakis's repeated resort to high-minded slogans about the rule of law, his attempt to practice law on the stump, marks his weakness as a politician. He always sounds, says one critic, like "the little mechanical man." This is true enough and to the extent that his style reminds ordinary voters of their generally unpleasant dealings with the Bar, the Democrats are hurt. But it is far more than a question of style. Dukakis's legalitarianism, to coin a neologism, is the evolved expression of post-Great Society liberalism, a liberalism honorably centered on the courts as the vehicle for the protection of minority rights. Its heroes are Constitution-quoting Senators like Sam Ervin, jurists like William Brennan and Thurgood Marshall, crusading lawyers like Ralph Nader, and a host of ACLU and Legal Services attorneys.

Legal liberalism has, in the form of the great public interest law firms and the ACLU, not only survived, but even thrived under Reaganism. Whatever liberalism's defeats on other fronts during the Reagan years, legalitarian liberalism was able to rise up and hand Reagan his biggest political defeat by blocking the appointment of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court.

There are, despite a shared button-down style, important differences between the technocratic liberalism of a John Kennedy and the legalitarian liberalism of Michael Dukakis. Postwar technocracy rested in large measure on the newly acquired prestige of the social sciences, particularly economics and sociology. The prestige of social science rested in turn on the uncritical, almost religious adulation Americans reserved for the neutral knowledge of scientific expertise. Kennedy and, in his early years, Johnson could always buttress their policy initiatives by appealing to the magisterial findings of social scientific research. But the empire of science and particularly social science is no more, its prestige consumed in the flames of Vietnam and the burning ghettos. The claims of scientific neutrality and objective knowledge were undermined by the moralists of both the left and right and by the intellectual revolt of the neoconservatives who turned social science against their own Great Society creations.

In the 1970s the legal crusader filled the vacuum created by the collapse of social science. Instead of new bureaucratic initiatives organized around social scientific knowledge we had the class action suit and pathbreaking Supreme Court decisions on women's rights and affirmative action. Legal Services attorneys and Naderites were busy suing unresponsive New Deal style bureaucracies on behalf of their poor and minority clients. The new liberal legalitarianism was as fierce as the sixties' counterculture in its defense of lifestyle and minority rights, and it was far more effective.

FDR could proudly proclaim that the "One great difference that has characterized the division (between liberals and conservatives) has been that the liberal party—no matter what its particular name was at the time—believes in the efficacy of the will of the great majority of the people as distinguished from the judgment of a small minority." The political problem for the Democrats is that this is no longer true. Despite the Democrats' recent attempt to rediscover economic populism, the civil libertarian tradition Dukakis represents has, often with good reason, moved to expand the power of a small minority of "wisemen," the judiciary. In short, the Democrats' economic majoritarianism is at odds with their social and cultural minoritarianism. Had the Democrats chosen Gephardt or Gore or even Simon they would have had a candidate both far better able to play on populist economic themes; they would also have had a candidate without Dukakis's minoritarian baggage.

The Bush people understood that baggage far better than the

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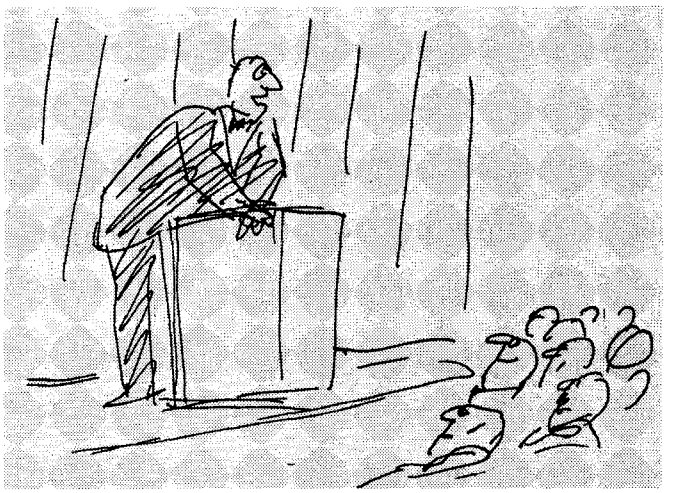
bewildered press. They studied something which has been largely ignored, the reasons for Ed King's victory over Governor Dukakis in 1978. King won by exploiting Dukakis's weaknesses on moral/cultural issues like the death penalty, abortion, and minimum jail sentences. In 1982 when the King administration, racked by massive scandals, was up for re-election, Dukakis led the race at one point by as much as 56 percentage points. But Dukakis, in a foreshadowing of the great turnaround of August '88, was unable to hold on to the loyalty of culturally conservative blue-collar voters. Dukakis went into a political free-fall and won by only 8 points.

The Bush campaign, closely imitating King, has tried to exploit the so-called wedge issues to create an anti-liberal majoritarian coalition around moral/cultural issues. Take the matter of Dukakis's now widely publicized furlough of convicted killer Willie Horton, who was serving a life sentence for a vicious murder. While out on the furlough Horton raped and sodomized a Maryland woman. Literally dozens of Dukakis defenders and editorial writers around the country have jumped to the Massachusetts Governor's defense. They note quite correctly that furlough programs are widely accepted penological practices common in many states; there was a similar program under Reagan when he was governor of California. But this is politically beside the point. Liberals have long argued against the death penalty by arguing that life imprisonment was a genuine alternative. What the Horton case dramatized, as the facts of the case were widely broadcast, was that perpetrators of heinous crimes in Massachusetts are not only given furloughs but are eventually paroled.

Dukakis defended himself in the Horton case by citing statistics and Massachusetts law. What the Bush people then delighted in pointing out was that under Dukakis's conception of the law it was legal to free a Willie Horton but illegal to require teachers to lead their classes in the Pledge of Allegiance. Instead of responding to Bush like a politician, instead of snapping back and pointing out the Pledge was never part of Bush's private school education, Dukakis responded like a civil liberties lawyer. In the manner of the libertarian who insists that opposition to laws restricting pornography doesn't imply an endorsement of pornography but rather a defense of tolerance, Dukakis was left limply explaining that his opposition to the law did not constitute an opposition to the Pledge.



"Fellow Democrats turned Republican, or is it the other way around?"

During the Bork hearings, Senator Biden, acting as an effective politician, placed the nominee on the defensive by posing the legal issues of privacy in starkly emotional terms. Does the state have a right to be in your bedroom, he asked. Bork tried to respond in narrowly jurisprudential terms. He was thrashed, just as smug Dukakis would be when he explained that it should have been obvious to even a first-year law student that the Constitution required him to veto the Pledge law. But this only compounded the problem since, as a number of conservative legal experts have only been too happy to point out, the Constitutional issues were far murkier than Dukakis had suggested. The effect was to take the gloss off Dukakis's high-mindedness. No more than social science can the law provide a neutral and objective basis for decision making. The governor's exalted concept of law, it seemed, was little more than a cloak for his own effete prejudices.

One needn't be particularly hardened to recognize that the law has often been unable to deal with thugs at home or abroad. In the words of a neighbor who was recently mugged and is now planning to vote for Bush: "What is Dukakis going to do, serve Noriega or Quadaffi with court papers? Is he going to threaten the underclass with legal proceedings?" Dukakis's principled bloodlessness, as political analyst Jim Chapin notes, has made even George Bush seem tough and bold by comparison.

Does all this mean that the election is in the bag for Bush? It does only if the Dukakis people are unable to surmount their provinciality. A Dukakis advisor, stunned by Bush's success, whined, "They're (the Bush campaign) running a class war against us, saying we're a bunch of Cambridge-Brookline eccentric literature professors. We've got to fight back," he went on, "and say that they're the party of privilege, the party of the rich folks." The problem he fails to grasp, but most of the country intuitively understands, is that Bush and Dukakis represent competing elites, neither of which is much loved. Dukakis, the Harvard free trader, though he must strike populist themes, will never be able to do so; his style will always speak against the substance of them. Dukakis can win because the broad indifference of the voters toward either man has created a volatile electorate. Bush's lead is by no means carved in stone. Dukakis can win then, not by making himself more attractive, but by driving up George Bush's negatives, by reminding people why they disliked Bush to begin with. Dukakis achieved some marginal success on this score during the first debate. If he learns to press his advantages more vigorously in the second, he may be able to paint Bush back into the corner from which the Republicans escaped in August.

The election is perhaps best summed up in the words of a seemingly lucid caller to a radio talk show. The caller explained that she had begun as a supporter of Bush, shifted to Dukakis, moved back to Bush, and was now uncertain—as is our fate. □

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THE FOREST & THE TREES

IN INDIA: CONSUMING WHAT MUST BE CONSERVED

DOUGLAS STEVENS

The heat is infernal. In Delhi, everyone is delighted that temperatures have fallen to one hundred degrees—it has been much worse in recent weeks. Along breathless country roads, the sight of a buffalo lying contemplatively in a mud hole is enough to make you weep for a cold shower.

India is simply *too much*: too hot, too vast, too complex. There are 800,000,000 people here, fourteen main languages and perhaps 200 dialects, desert and rain forest and Himalayan peaks, every possible religion.

It is the forty-fourth anniversary of the death of Shri Vijaya Shanti, a Hindu holy man with followers throughout India. In the great courtyard of the temple must be a thousand people, men on one side of the central aisle, women on the other. On a massive stage, dozens of musical groups take turns singing praises of their guru. In a semi-circle behind them are ranged the officers of the temple, prominent people of the city—and me.

I stumbled into this celebration by following a parade through town: elephants, hand-drawn carts bearing musicians in full song, cows draped in bright cloth and flowers, their horns painted blue. Along the way, I talked with a group of young men selling souvenirs of the day. I asked for a poster, the guru beneath a tree on the shores of a peaceful lake, around him in perfect peace an audience of tigers, deer, peacocks, monkeys. "You must not misuse this poster," they warned me, "he is our god." Then they brought me as their guest to the temple.

The music being played could be from India anytime, drums and harmoniums and pulsing voices. At the edge of the stage, though, is a Sinclair computer programmed by one of my newly-found friends to flash messages through the evening: *Jai Guru Dev* (Hail Our Guru and Saint), *Shri Vijaya Shanti*, then the town from which comes the current group of singers, and once more *Jai Guru Dev*, over and over. It is almost as hypnotic as the music.

The same party is happening everywhere. For days after this, as we drive across India, we pass cows now stripped of their garlands and drapery, their horns a steadily fading shade of blue.

DOUGLAS STEVENS *is a pseudonym; the author is a development analyst who has written for* Commonweal *previously on third-world issues.*

The tiger lies down with the deer; the cow coexists with the computer. This is a day to savor, since much of India is not like this at all. Instead, every day, terrorists kill police somewhere, police kill terrorists, police beat demonstrators or shoot them, activists blow up people. In the home, women are burned alive for not providing their husbands with sufficient dowry: in Delhi alone, there is a "dowry death" every twelve hours. In the countryside, foresters battle with villagers.

Since I am in India to look at reforestation projects, I have a special interest in how foresters and villagers relate. These groups have a long, unhappy history of conflict. In 1945, Gopinath Mohanty wrote *Paraja*, a tale of tribal life that has become a classic. At the beginning of Mohanty's novel, the Paraja tribesmen are living in a state of harmony with each other and their environment. This equilibrium is destroyed through the agency of the local forest guard, who tries to seduce a young village girl. Rebuffed, the guard brings a false case against the girl's father for cutting trees from the forest. The father and his sons are forced into bondage to a moneylender as the only means of paying the fine. By the end of the novel, the family has been destroyed and the life of the tribe badly shaken.

Such things really did happen—and are happening today. While I was in India, foresters clashed with villagers in a tribal area in the center of the country. According to press reports, the incident began after tribesmen tried to free a young man who had been beaten and detained by forest guards. The foresters lashed back at nearby villages, gang-raping one

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woman, beating people, and arresting bystanders on a variety of false charges. The violence was more direct and extreme than in the fictional *Paraja*, but it reflected the same, long-standing sense of strain between tribal people and foresters.

In part, this stems from a simple racism. As in *Paraja*, many forest villagers are from tribal groups. Some of the tribes were here long before the dominant Caucasians began to arrive from Central Asia, perhaps eight thousand years ago. As India's "Indians," people from tribal groups are viewed with varying degrees of contempt. In conversation, they are known simply as "the tribals," as in "Look man, there's a tribal!" The foresters share this language, and the villagers know it.

We drive all afternoon to reach a remote plantation. For a time, I follow the tour prepared for us. Then, I shed my escort and head into the forest, walking among the teak trees. For a long, peaceful moment there is silence, and then the most magical sounds begin. Blowing among the trees are little percussions of air, like wind chimes, or drops of water falling into a pool. Drawn to the sounds, I find myself out of the forest and back at the roadside. There, the mystery is explained: passing down the road is a herd of cows, their bells thunking as they head for home.

Not everyone finds romance in the cows. I am traveling with a British forester who quickly decides that cows cause degraded forests. "They're like locusts," he says, "sweeping through the forest in search of food." Reminded that Hindus consider cows sacred, he waves his arms. "We have to cast away all this ju-ju," he says. "Bloody cows, they should all be killed and eaten." The Indians we're with grow silent when he gets like this.

Still, he has a point. For decades, the forests have been under great pressure from foraging livestock, as well as from commercial timber interests and land-hungry peasants. Although statistics on deforestation are shaky, even the range of possibilities is scary: since 1952, the area covered by forests has contracted by 20-40 percent, depending on whose estimates you believe. Perhaps 100 million acres of the remaining forest could be classified as "degraded," and as many as 4 million acres of forest disappear entirely each year.

As a result, firewood and building materials become painfully scarce. Soils lose texture and fertility in the absence of the root systems and leafy humus that trees used to supply. The problem is compounded as people collect dung to use as fuel, instead of spreading this on their fields for manure. As deforestation spreads, rainfall becomes erratic. When the rains do fall, they wash quickly off the dead, compacted soils.

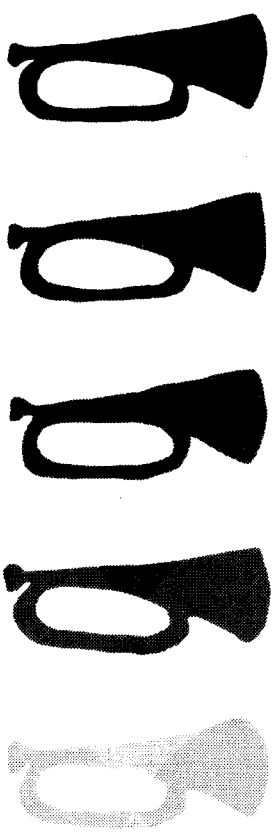
The foresters' instinctive response is to tighten control over the trees. Trenches are dug to keep livestock out of the forest; guards are posted to send people away. Scrubby trees are pruned back, and seedlings are planted to fill up the empty spaces. Given time and a little help, the forest creates itself anew.

Any sense of satisfaction ends at the trench line, however. Outside the perimeter, people know only that they are being kept from things they desperately need. Everyone can think of better ways to use the forest: grazing hungry animals there, cutting trees for firewood and building poles. Most poignant are the landless (half the families in many forest villages), who are shut out from land they could use to grow food. When you have nothing to eat, or no fuel for cooking, "conservation" is an ugly and threatening word.

The threat is made all too visible. At each site we visit, the forest guards are drawn up on display. They are dressed in military khaki, a cascade of braid and stars and epaulets on their shoulders. Each wears a military beret (save the Sikhs, who are turbaned above the khaki). As we alight from our Land Cruisers, the guards greet us with a stamp of the foot and a crisp salute. The image they project is meant to intimidate, not to reassure.

The tension over the forests is resolved in standard ways. For example, foresters can accept money to look away as people cut trees. (Persistent rumor has it that to *become* a forester requires a bribe equal to a year's salary, money that is quickly recovered.) Alternatively, foresters who refuse to look away can simply be eliminated. (Rumor also has it that a couple of hundred foresters are murdered each year by villagers in need of wood.)

Increasingly, local people also use the political system to support their incursions into the forest. Especially at election time, you can find a politician to stand behind you as you cut



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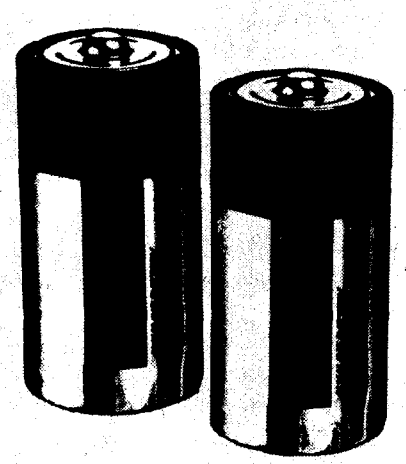

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the forest department's trees and settle on its land.

This makes the foresters angry and bitter. Almost universally, they have come to consider "democracy" a dirty word, a cloak for spineless vote-mongering at the permanent expense of the environment. The ex-colonial British forester with whom I'm traveling understands their frustrations: "If these tribals had cut the trees in the old days," he reflects nostalgically, "we'd just have knocked their heads together, eh?" But you are not supposed to do that now, and the foresters—and the forests—are suffering.

The foresters fight back as best they can. When possible, they have areas reclassified from "protected forests" (where villagers have some traditional rights) to "reserve forests" (where villagers have no rights at all). And they try to restore degraded areas, as in the projects we have been seeing. But more and more, it seems to them a losing battle.

Would things work better if heads could be knocked together? Possibly, if the foresters could see clearly into the heads they were knocking. Mere coercion cannot keep hundreds of millions of people out of the forest. Empathy is called for, in order to set a course for forest management that people can respect.

But empathy is not the foresters' most conspicuous quality. We are visiting a village where the forest department is assisting a national scheme for "tribal development." As the villagers cluster around to watch, we are told (by the foresters) about what has been provided during the past several years: a well for drinking water, an irrigation system, firewood and fodder plantations on the village land, a community center. Once the foresters are finished, the head of the village council is brought on to testify to the revolution in living standards that these things represent.

As the speeches continue, I wander off down the road with a couple of villagers, members of the local tribe. They tell a different story. They've heard nothing about an irrigation scheme, nothing about firewood and fodder. Yes, there is a community center, but the head of the council keeps the key, and only his friends are allowed to use the place. As for the well, it was placed in a part of the village where the higher castes are concentrated. My tribal informants don't feel welcome there, so they go to the river for their water, as they've always done.

At this point, one of the foresters catches up with us. From now on, when I ask the villagers a question, the forester answers for them. Little by little, the scheme starts making sense again. The villagers drift away, but not in peace. There is little empathy at work here. Indian foresters may suffer from a lack of control over people, but it is hard to have confidence in what they would do if "democracy" were curtailed and they were granted more power.

What can come of a situation like this? In one Indian state, $100 million is about to be spent on degraded forests. Over five years, this massive program will rehabilitate just 3.5 percent of the forest land now classified as "degraded." At such a pace, it would take 143 years to rehabilitate today's degraded areas. But new areas are becoming degraded all the

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time, at least as fast as this program could rehabilitate old ones. The *best* that could happen is that things might remain in their present, disastrous state.

But the best cannot happen. Even now, desperate people everywhere bypass the guards and chip away at the forest. The pressure will grow with the population. At present growth rates, population in these areas would expand twenty-fold over 143 years. It cannot really come to that, but there will inevitably be a great increase in the numbers of people and animals in need of the forest. *Whatever* the foresters do, the forests will be pushed back, the environment will deteriorate, and people will suffer.

I talk with a group of farmers about their use of forest produce. Across the dirt track that bisects the village, a two-wheeled bullock cart is tipped forward on its poles, its bed in the air. A couple of curious children climb into the cart to watch us talk. Another child joins them, then two more. There is one child too many now, and the cart loses balance; it tips abruptly back onto its bed, children spilling into the dirt.

Too many children for such a precariously-balanced cart: that's what I keep seeing here, and I fear what it could mean for India. □

SCREEN

A TRIPLEHEADER
'EIGHT MEN OUT,' 'SUMMER,' & 'SHAME'

Eight Men Out takes up where *Bull Durham* left off: here is not just a better than usual baseball film, but a sadder and wiser one. John Sayles, director of last year's *Matewan*, tackles the World Series scandal of 1919—the fix that cost eight Chicago "Black Sox" their careers. Most films about athletics are untrue both to sports and life: they emphasize sensational plays and leave out or trivialize the social context of sport itself. Like *Bull Durham*, *Eight Men Out* presents baseball not as momentarily glorious but consistently intense; it also raises issues of integrity and class war in the mode of moral tragedy.

Matewan concerned a coal miners' strike in 1919; *Eight Men Out* includes references to the unrest and the subsequent "Red Scare" in which the first baseball commissioner, Judge "Kenesaw Mountain" Landis, so impressed corporate America with anti-labor rulings. Sayles's first strength as a director—or historian—lies in linking the wider class war with the class war in sports. In a daring, rapid-fire opening, Sayles shows how the anger of the talented White Sox against their skinflint owner, Charlie Comiskey, moved them to take bribes to throw the championship. No one more embodies the conflict of honesty and anger over economic injustice than pitcher Eddie Cicotte (David Straitharn, who played a similar conflicted role as the sheriff in *Matewan*).

Sayles's second directorial strength is his command of an ensemble of actors—Maggi Rienzi as Cicotte's wife; Charlie Sheen as a happy-go-lucky, easily corruptible outfielder; John Cusack as third baseman Buck Weaver, who knew of the fix but refused to play less than his best; and D. B. Sweeney as "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, of whom a young fan gets to ask the original question—"Say it ain't so, Joe?" Jackson, Sayles shows, was almost as innocent as the kid, but it didn't save him from being banned from professional baseball. Sweeney's performance is a sweet, sad lyric: his "Shoeless" Joe can't even sign a confession—not because he fears the consequences but from shame that as an illiterate hillbilly he can't even write his own name.

Sayles's problem lies with trying to tell too many stories at once: other ballplayers, their wives, the gamblers—are all given idiosyncracies that demand more space and time than the unmerciful frame of a two-hour film allows. The film goes slightly slack about a third of the way through—the same problem as in *Matewan*. But the weakness attests to Sayles's wide sympathies. He gets his finest bit role from a hammy Studs Terkel as journalist Hugh Fullerton, almost proud that such badness as a World Series fix could occur in Chicago. Sayles himself struts around as Ring Lardner and helps Terkel uncover the scandal.

Sayles cares so much about the real that he tries to fit too much in. Yet how often he succeeds—from the old style, thin-leathered baseball mitts, to spitballs (still legal), to the speed

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LOYOLA
NEW ORLEANS

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that dominated baseball before the coming of the livelier ball and Ruthean home runs. Better still is the period look (from production designer Nora Chavoosian), the sentimentality of the National Anthem (genuinely sung), the ugly anti-Semitism and red-baiting. A child of the sixties, Sayles transcends the platitudes of sterile dissent and reactionary superpatriotism; he is too honest either to deny his love of the American heritage or to ignore its warts.

Several fine foreign films premiered quietly this late summer. Since they are still touring nationally and will arrive ultimately in video or on PBS, they deserve mention.

Summer Story (from a Galsworthy tale) is set in England's Dartmoor. No recent film—not even *A Room with a View*—has been so splendidly photographed. It supplies classic love tragedy, whose only flaw is too slow an early pace.

An Oxford chap on a pre-World War I holiday (James Wilby, previously in the Merchant-Ivory film, *Maurice*), injures his ankle while walking in Devon. He takes refuge at the Narracombe farm, owned by an aging widow (Susannah York) and her family, all complete with West Country burrs. Before long, he and a blue-eyed damsel (Imogen Stubbs) exchange little shocks of quiet, erotic electricity. Although the movement of custard and pie is slow as Wilby recuperates, the film's development is infused with high sexual tension, especially in the excellent sheep-shearing and dinner-dance scenes that come straight out of Myth.

But the film doesn't sentimentalize life on the farm, which is hearty but rugged. Joe (Jerome Flynn), the girl's local boyfriend, poses a menace to the budding love between her and Wilby that crosses both class and cultural lines. Sadly, the worst menace is from one of the lovers. The actors, director Piers Haggard, and screenwriter Penelope Mortimer (writer of *The Pumpkin Eater*) have so beautifully collaborated in making this film that they breathe fresh life and a keen sense of pain into the plain, unadorned tale of a broken heart. Their art recaptures the mood of the grand old ballads.

Ms. Stubbs stands out as the heroine, and brings rich depth to innocence. The "find" of a recent season at the Royal Shakespeare Company, she has a memorable face; like Vanessa Redgrave's daughter, Natasha Richardson, she combines both angular cheekbones with a peachy complexion to project strength and grace. She alone is worth the price of several admissions.

Another memorable heroine is Asta Cadell (Deborra-Lee Furness) in the Australian *Shame*. The film replays all the clichés of the traditional heroic Western and "macho" motorbike film: a rural town, desert isolation, gangs of thugs roaming the streets and terrifying citizens, and a mysterious stranger who rides into town to confront them. Only this time she's a woman.

Once the ramifications of this role-switch become apparent, *Shame* is predictably melodramatic, but still very powerful. You keep hoping that the obvious terrible thing won't happen; it does. Asta is a sexy, punky blonde, geared up in leather; she quickly finds out that harassment and rape are the main pastimes of the town's young males. They assume that they can treat her the same as all the other women about; as usual in a Western, the bad guys underestimate their new antagonist. She knows karate, and is on vacation from her law practice in Sydney. She terrifies the local police into trying to reestablish law and order (in the past, the sheriff has dismissed rape as "boys having a little bit o' fun," or, like many in the town, has blamed the victims). Asta also bucks up the courage of one of them (Simone Buchanan) to press charges.

The dignity of this film lies in its fairness and honesty. Directed by Steven Jodrell, it doesn't make all the men villains; Buchanan's father is shown (after initial lack of understanding) coming to defend her honor. The rich mother of one of the rapists is shown threatening him with a boycott of his gas station. Jodrell thus makes sure good and evil are not matters of gender. At the same time, there is no ambiguity about the evil of rape.

TOM O'BRIEN

Regina deCormier-Shekerjian

The First Telling

Fourth of July sparklers ablaze
on the pond. In the trees
bronze bells of light, scattered
rubble of light in the leaves
beneath my feet. Drenched with light

deer move toward the orchard
where Leuken has left some of his apples
for winter food. Above the pond
a disorderly V of geese flying south.

In a cathedral of bony trees,
balanced between bells and the sudden
madness of leaves in flight, I watch
light
splinter beneath the perfectly tuned wings
of the hawk
diving

and the sky
parts as the rabbit lifts, soars
with hawk
above a gritty chorus of ducks.

I walk back to the house. In my hands
tufts of light,
the first telling of winter.

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Mrs. Hawkins strikes back

A FAR CRY FROM KENSINGTON
Muriel Spark
Houghton Mifflin, $17.95, 189 pp.

Robert E. Hosmer

On holiday in Tuscany, sometime in the mid-1980s, the protagonist of this, Muriel Spark's eighteenth novel, pays the bill for luncheon at a restaurant "within a restored medieval castle famous for Dante's once having slept there," and moves toward the door. An overheard remark, "Yes, there's a wealth of wild flowers and butterflies," catches her attention:

> Something about the tourist-brochure quality of the phrase made me look at the speaker. Thin, with a gray face and white wispy hair, it was, after all these years, Hector Bartlett...
>
> *"Pisseur de copie,"* I hissed.

Nancy Todd, the former Mrs. Hawkins, returns to her car, where her husband asks, "Did you settle your bill?" and she responds, "Yes." In *A Far Cry from Kensington* Muriel Spark does more than her protagonist: with characteristic wit and economy, as well as somewhat uncharacteristic humor and vituperation, she has settled a few scores: against publishers, editors, hack writers, quacks of several stripes, and one *pisseur de copie* in particular.

A Far Cry from Kensington takes the reader back to territory Mrs. Spark has made her own: post-World War II London, on the fringes of literary life in slightly seedy Kensington, the world of *The Girls of Slender Means* and *Loitering with Intent,* to a time (it's 1954) when Britain had not yet fully recovered from blackouts and air raids. Like Jane Wright in the former novel, Mrs. Hawkins is fat, indeed she is enormous, and works in publishing; but Mrs. Hawkins dominates this new novel in a way that Jane Wright did not. Thoroughly self-aware, she does a personal inventory of sorts early on:

> There was something about me, Mrs. Hawkins, that invited confidences. I was abundantly aware of it, and indeed abundance was the impression I gave. I was massive in size, strong-muscled, huge-bosomed, with wide hips, hefty long legs, a bulging belly and fat backside...I looked comfortable. Photographs of the time show me with a moon-face, two ample chins and sleepy eyes.

Like a number of Mrs. Spark's novels—*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* and *Memento Mori* spring to mind—this is a novel about groups of people. Mrs. Hawkins lives at 14 Church End Villas, a rooming house run by Milly Sanders, an Irish landlady with "narrative skill [that] was considerable"; also resident are Wanda Podolak, a "Polish dressmaker

whose capacity for suffering verged on rapacity"; Basil Carlin and his wife, Eva, a circumspect, childless couple; William Todd, a medical student; Kate Parker, a compulsively organized twenty-five-year-old nurse with a hygienic obsession; and Isobel Lederer, a young secretary who calls her father in Sussex daily.

Two other groups—one at the Ullswater Press, where Mrs. Hawkins first works, another at her second employer, Makintosh and Tooley—seem galleries of eccentric personalities in their own right. Martin York, a principal of the former firm, goes to jail for forgery and fraud; Ian Tooley, director of the second, believes in radionics, a bogus science based on the "power" of a black box and hires help who have obvious physical imperfections and debilities so that rejected authors will likely not retaliate.

The orbits of these three groups overlap not only because of Mrs. Hawkins but also because of the malign interference of one Hector Bartlett, a hack writer who will go to great lengths in his attempts to be published. Regularly accosting Mrs. Hawkins on her way to the Ullswater Press, Hector says things like, "Mrs. Hawkins, I take incalculable pains with my prose style," and she responds, in thought only, "*pisseur de copie.*" One day when she can take his verbal assaults no longer, she spits the epithet at him and her troubles begin. Hector has attached himself to Emma Loy, a successful novelist, and she causes Mrs. Hawkins to lose her job first at the Press, then at Makintosh and Tooley. Mrs. Hawkins simply cannot keep silent, you see, deriving distinct satisfaction from telling everyone what she thinks of Hector Bartlett ("it feels like preaching the gospel," she declares).

With her usual economical ability to

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discern the telling detail and record the resonant remark, Mrs. Spark has constructed a plot—or series of interconnected plots—that involves suicide, spiritualism, ethnic politics, and nights at the opera, among other things. *A Far Cry from Kensington* reads like a mystery novel, albeit a somewhat metaphysical member of that species, with Hector Bartlett meant to be a satanic magician infusing the plots with his malign presence and Nancy Hawkins, an Anglo-Catholic of assurance and conviction, a polar force of moral energy set against the hack. Mrs. Hawkins receives confidences and dispenses advice from a carefully-defined position:

> I enjoy a puritanical and moralistic nature; it is my happy element to judge between right and wrong, regardless of what I might actually do. At the same time, the wreaking of vengeance and imposing of justice on others and myself are not at all in my line. It is enough for me to discriminate mentally and leave the rest to God.

So far, so typical. But several elements in *A Far Cry* are unexpected, or at least take unaccustomed turns, in a novel by Mrs. Spark. Wit and humor we have come to expect from her, and here she does not disappoint. The advice that Mrs. Hawkins dispenses contains both: for rheumatism, eat a banana a day; for concentration on a writing project, get a cat; if you are contemplating marriage, see your intended one drunk first; "it is a good thing to go to Paris for a few days if you have had a lot of trouble, and that is my advice to everyone except Parisians." All dispensations are gratis: "I offer this advice without fee; it is included in the price of this book," she tells the reader.

COMING
Fall Books, November 4
Bill Sheed on Bill Buckley

What is unexpected and delightfully so, is the element of sex comedy we find in *A Far Cry*. At Ullswater Press, a young man named Patrick is the packer and sorter of books; his wife, Mabel, invariably accuses Mrs. Hawkins of seducing him. At one point, after obtaining a new job for Patrick when Ullswater goes under, Mrs. Hawkins receives a spate of phone calls, some of gratitude, some of reproach, from Mabel. The besieged Mrs. Hawkins notes:

> For Patrick's sake I tried to humor her as long as I could. I hardly listened to her on the phone, so that my answers didn't always correspond to what she was saying: "It was a pleasure, Mabel. No trouble on my part. I hope everything will go well with you, now," I said once, when she was actually accusing me of "doing it upside down" with her husband.

Second, this novel is animated, on occasion, by a palpable depth of feeling, something a number of critics have been unable to discern in Mrs. Spark's earlier novels. After Wanda Podolak's suicide, Mrs. Hawkins sifts through the dressmaker's personal effects and reflects: "The sadness of these last gatherings of personal effects...is more inexpressible than the funeral...the grief which is latent in relics like Wanda's pair of shoes has no equivalent at all." Moreover, this novel ends with hope, offering the reader a glimpse of Mrs. Hawkins, now long married to Dr. Todd, on holiday in Tuscany. One feels that the great comic dance of William in his cotton pajamas and Mrs. Hawkins in her black lace dress forty years before, in the garden at #14 Church End Villas, has come full circle.

Third, though we expect a sharply satirical edge in the writing of this artist who once declared that "ridicule is the only weapon we [writers] have left," the satire in *A Far Cry* is occasionally more vituperative than usual. In some cases, as in her narrative of a dinner party at the home of Ian Tooley or her description of the homosexual principals who run the *Highgate Review*, a publication Mrs. Hawkins edits after leaving Makintosh and Tooley, Mrs. Spark's satire is light and playful. But when her arrows are aimed at Hector Bartlett, there is venom on the tips. Her first explosion is typical:

> *Pisseur de copie!* Hector Bartlett, it seemed to me, vomited literary matter, he urinated and sweated, he excreted it.
>
> "Mrs. Hawkins, I take incalculable pains with my prose style."
>
> He did indeed. The pains showed. His writings writhed and ached with twists and turns and tergiversations, inept words, fanciful repetitions, far-fetched verbosity and long, Latin-based words.

The vehemence of this scorn, considered within the context of a novel with undeniable autobiographical resonances, teases the reader.

Mrs. Spark has not been able to take Mrs. Hawkins's advice fully: it is not enough for her "to discriminate mentally and leave the rest to God." As Mrs. Hawkins herself notes, "I have always been free with advice; but it is one thing to hand out advice and another to persuade people to accept it." *A Far Cry from Kensington* gives more pleasure than lunch in a castle where Dante once slept. □

URGENT HUMANITARIAN APPEAL!

In an appeal to the international human rights community, 12 of the 2800 Palestinian prisoners held without charges or trial in the "Ansar III" prison camp in the Negev Desert have sent out a signed petition seeking urgent assistance to secure adequate water, food, medical care, family contacts and access to legal counsel. These prisoners are held 28 to a tent and, as punishment, are often forced to sit in the blazing sun or placed in metallic containers for hours on end in temperatures reaching 120 degrees. This prison should be closed immediately. *We urge you to write or telegram:*

Ambassador Moshe Arad
Embassy of Israel
3514 International Dr., NW
Washington, DC 20008

Itzhak Rabin
Ministry of Defense
W. Jerusalem, Israel

Please send a copy of your letter to: **American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee**
Ansar III Project
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THE INSTITUTION THAT REFUSES TO DIE

THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC PARISH
A History from 1850 to the Present
Vol. I: The Northeast, Southeast, and South Central States
Vol. II: The Pacific, Intermountain West, and Midwest States
Edited by Jay P. Dolan
Paulist, $24.95 each vol., 359 pp. and 423 pp.

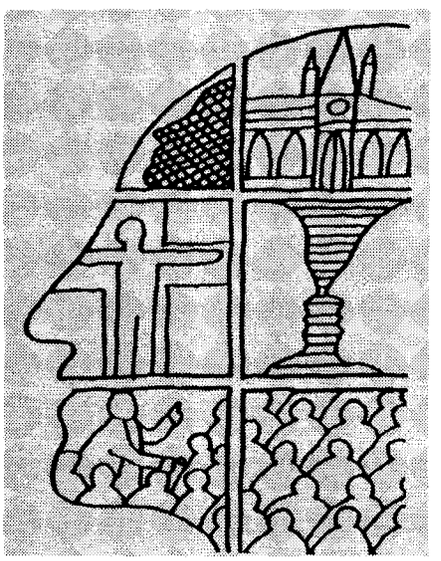
Robert E. Sullivan

The social history of American ecclesiastical institutions has been largely ignored. Professor Jay P. Dolan of Notre Dame University is thus justified in asserting that *The American Catholic Parish* is "a new type" of work. Mr. Dolan commissioned six scholars to write regional histories as part of a large-scale study of contemporary parochial life under way at South Bend. Working against a tight deadline, they had little time for original research. One of them might have been describing the entire project when he characterized his own essay as "intended to be incomplete and a prod to future historians."

The American Catholic Parish is valuable both as a prod and as a survey of existing literature. Mr. Dolan wisely allowed his contributors latitude in organizing their essays. They are intelligent. Their prose is clear and generally well-edited. Because they were unable to follow the lead of European church historians and lavishly exploit social science, their method tends toward the anecdotal. A map showing the present-day distribution of American Catholics and their parishes would have enriched the books. A series of retrospective analyses of such a map based on the available federal religious censuses could have yielded revelations.

Eager to dispel " the myth that American Catholicism is Chicago or New York Catholicism writ large," Mr. Dolan allocated virtually equal space to each contributor. In fact, the historical shape of the church in America suggests the *New Yorker's* "Map of the United States." For most of the period covered by these volumes, over 70 percent of the Catholic population and the majority of its parishes were located in the fourteen states east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio. The tension between allocated space and demographic reality shows. If the historians who cover the heartland of American Catholicism sound rather breathless, those assigned its vast perimeters occasionally struggle to fill their pages.

In a survey of the Northeast, John J. Casino introduces four recurrent themes: the parish as a major institution for the Americanization of successive waves of immigrants; the slow rise of regular Mass attendance as a majority practice; the shifting balance between lay and clerical initiatives in parochial life; and the wide variety of parishes. Mr. Casino's tone is even and his sympathies generous. The years between 1850 and 1880 were decisive for Northeastern Catholicism. In the face of nativist hostility parishes became "fortresses" harboring a range of protective institutions and services. That model prevailed until the eve of Vatican II. Although the postconciliar era proved wrenching for many Northeastern parishes, Mr. Casino, like the other contributors, judges the overall result positively.



The South Atlantic region long failed to attract great numbers of immigrants. Michael J. McNally suspects that its small Catholic minority was frequently lukewarm. Until the flight to the Sunbelt and urbanization transformed the area, most of its parishes had a rural, missionary character. They lacked the resources to become massive, clerically managed institutions. Even so, they were affected by the centralization and bureaucratization which have marked the twentieth-century church. In the Southeast as elsewhere, diocesan authority over parish life has swelled. With a fine eye for ambiguity, Rev. McNally recognizes the paradox of postconciliar collaborative structures: "Not only is the parish council a triumph of American democratic traditions, but it is also a triumph of American bureaucracy."

According to Charles J. Nolan, parish growth in the South Central region followed a "twofold direction": gradual expansion into the heavily Protestant countryside and multiplication in an increasing number of cities. Even before 1900 Texas and Oklahoma were the center of Catholic population growth. Parish construction boomed, particularly after World War II. Regionalism has declined. Mr. Nolan skillfully blends statistics and stories to explore the impact of current national trends on South Central parishes. Since 1960 the Catholic school system has diminished, interreligious marriages have become more common, and the proportion of children being catechized has apparently fallen.

Jeffrey M. Burns sees two constants in the parochial history of the Pacific region: "the typical . . . parishioner has been ethnic, working-class, and urban;" and building and fund-raising have been "the heart and soul of . . . parish life." Because of the weakness of organized religion in the Pacific Northwest, the endurance of missionary conditions in the newest states, and sheer numbers, California is central to Mr. Burns's essay. He writes sensitively of the Hispanic folk Catholicism which so frequently irked

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Anglo clerics. For much of the twentieth century they seemed disposed to write off the Mexican-American community. Mr. Burns is also sensitive to the complex implications of recent liturgical change. It has emphasized community, experience, and intelligibility. In some cases, he thinks, this has resulted in "robbing the ritual of its impact."

The eight states of the Intermountain West offer a particular challenge. As recently as 1936 they contained fewer Catholics than Connecticut spread over an area five times as large as California. Carol L. Jensen writes evocatively about frontier parishes animated by a stoutly missionary spirit. She depicts longing for "collegial authority and a communal self-image as the People of God" as the motif of the postconciliar era in the region.

Stephen J. Shaw's essay on the parishes of twelve North Central states ends the book. He recognizes that the "Midwest" is a portmanteau concept: "The development of the Church [there] was as varied as its cities and plains." The crucial role of German-Americans in the region's parochial life—above all, in the founding of its parochial schools—is perhaps the major connecting thread. Mr. Shaw has a number of strengths. His feel for the effects of tenacious ethnic diversity on Midwestern Catholicism is sure. His portrayal of the area as the American seedbed for the conciliar reforms is convincing. He lacks, however, his colleagues' appreciation for the intricacy of earlier popular religion. Ms. Jensen's sophisticated treatment of the Hispanic "little tradition" invites imitation.

The American Catholic Parish offers ample evidence that reports of the imminent death of that institution were indeed exaggerated. □

THE PARISH: A BENCHMARK SURVEY

THE EMERGING PARISH
The Notre Dame Study of Catholic Life Since Vatican II
Joseph Gremillion and Jim Castelli
Harper & Row, $16.95, 222 pp.

Russell Barta

During the late sixties and into the seventies, the American Catholic parish, that traditional hub of Catholic religious life, didn't seem to have much of a future. During this period of ecclesial turmoil and confusion the parish experienced a dramatic drop in Mass attendance. Many parishes were rocked by "polarization." At the same time many Catholics were bent on seeking alternatives to their neighborhood parish. Experimental groups, "floating parishes," began to surface along with "underground" liturgical groups. In the opinion of some the familiar neighborhood parish was an old, traditional wineskin that could not possibly hold the new wine of Vatican II.

Today the situation and mood are quite different. Mass attendance has stabilized. Many of the experiments proved to be short-lived religious fads. The neighborhood parish has shown its staying power; in the eighties it continues to be the center of Catholic life. According to the authors of *The Emerging Parish*, the parish, though different in many ways from its pre-Vatican II predecessor, is basically healthy. As Joseph Gremillion and Jim Castelli show the story is more than one of mere survival. The lowly parish has done an extraordinary job of mediating and reflecting the great changes since Vatican II.

Relying on data gathered by the Notre Dame Study of Catholic Life, conducted between 1982 and 1984, Gremillion and Castelli paint an upbeat profile of the parish and its parishioners. They are not alone in their positive assessment of Catholic life today. John Coleman, S.J., recently pointed out in his perceptive overview (*Church*, Spring, 1988) how bullish national surveys of Catholic attitudes are on the future of the U.S. church. They point to stability and potential growth—not decline. Needless to say, such optimistic readings of the pulse of Catholic life differ sharply from the view often presented in the media that the Catholic church in the U.S. is a sand castle about to be washed away by a powerful tide of dissent.

The Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life was originally conceived by Reverend Philip Murnion and Monsignor John Egan and was conducted by the Institute for Pastoral and Social Ministry and the Center for the Study of Contemporary Society of the University of Notre Dame. Between 1984 and 1987 the results were published in eleven technical reports, ten of which are summarized in *The Emerging Parish*, making the results available in readable and engaging prose to a wider audience. Joseph Fichter, S.J., well known for his earlier work on the Catholic parish, describes the Notre Dame study as "unquestionably the most solid piece of research ever done on both priests and people at the parish level."

The data came from a number of sources. A questionnaire was sent to the pastors/administrators of 10 percent of the 18,500 parishes in the U.S. yielding 1,099 usable responses (a 59 percent return). Thirty-six parishes were then chosen as "representative." Questionnaires were sent to a sample of the Catholics registered at those parishes with a return rate of 59 percent or 2,667 non-Hispanic individuals who were sufficiently motivated to answer a lengthy questionnaire. Throughout the book they are referred to as "core" Catholics, that is, parish-connected Catholics.

Catholics in the Notre Dame sample differ significantly from Catholics at large. They are older, more affluent, and considerably better educated. Their average age is 49.3 years, compared to the average of 42.6 years of the general Catholic population. Twenty-three percent of core Catholics had a family income above $40,000 a year, about one-third higher than the national average.

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Core Catholics have more education than Catholics generally—in fact, 50 percent greater than Catholics nationally. Obviously the unique nature of the Notre Dame sample would seem to call for some caution in generalizing about all Catholic parishioners.

The Emerging Parish documents the historic shift since Vatican II in the relationship of laity to their parish. Though always involved in parish life, laity today, or at least some of them, are involved in a qualitatively different way. A flood-tide of lay persons has penetrated the rectory establishment as evidenced by their active and responsible presence in liturgy, governance, and programming. Beyond the pastor, 83 percent of those identified as the leadership within the parish are lay persons. Among the paid staff with responsibility for key programs, 57 percent are lay. In 64 percent of the parishes, leadership involves a combination of pastor, religious, and laity who function more or less as a ministerial team. The role of the pastor is still central but the parish is no longer a "one-man" operation.

Like its pre-Vatican II predecessor, today's parish, according to Gremillion and Castelli, is more than a way-station for the reception of the sacraments. It offers a wide variety of programs and services. Seventy-six percent of the parishes in the survey report having a parish council; 72 percent, a liturgy planning group; 63 percent, adult religious education programs; 62 percent, youth ministry; 46 percent, prayer/reflection groups; 29 percent, parish renewal groups; 20 percent, peace and justice committees. Core Catholics report that they took part in at least one parish activity beyond religious rites. Gremillion and Castelli report that the Catholics in the Notre Dame sample expressed high levels of satisfaction with their parishes. They attend their territorial parish because they want to, not because they feel obligated to do so. Eighty-five percent say their parish meets their spiritual needs "completely" or "very well." Fifty-six percent responded that their parish meets their social "needs" completely or "very well." They are enthusiastic about the liturgical reforms introduced since Vatican II. Seventy-two percent attend weekend Mass every week (a figure much higher than other surveys indicate); another 13 percent, two or three times a month.

The Emerging Parish is loaded with fascinating information on the social attitudes of core Catholics. For example, 92 percent support a bilateral nuclear freeze, and 35 percent favor a unilateral freeze by the U.S. government on nuclear weapons development. These figures are amazing. On the other hand, 65 percent of core Catholics support the death penalty for persons convicted of murder. Two-thirds of core Catholics reject church teachings on birth control and divorce. Although generally opposed to abortion, they approve of it in cases of rape and incest.

Gremillion and Castelli are more than cheerleaders of the emerging Catholic parish. Readers will find in their book plenty of critical analysis, sometimes trenchant, always perceptive. For example, they describe the Saturday evening Mass in some parishes as "a ghetto where uninterested priests lead dull services for bored people." Although enthusiastic about lay initiatives in the parish, they detect signs of a "lay clericalism" developing among lay leaders. They report significant gaps in perception among pastor, staff, and volunteers about who really calls the shots in parish life. They point out the chasm between rhetoric and reality when only 2 percent of core Catholics are involved in evangelization programs, and only 4 percent in the social service and peace and justice programs of the parish. Parishes report that their best attended program is bingo. They give poor marks to rural parishes, finding them laggard in liturgical reform and program development.

When Gremillion and Castelli look to the future, it is the suburban parishes they single out as being on the cutting edge of change in the church. They regard them as "pioneer ventures" because they are successful in developing a sense of community without the glue of a homogeneous population. This exaggerates the homogeneity of the urban parish today. Besides, the phrase "pioneer ventures" could equally be applied to those parishes attempting to fashion a unique ministry to the new immigrants, in particular to Hispanics and Asians, who are changing the ethnic face of American cities and of the church. Incidentally, I found it surprising that in comparing parishes no attempt was made to compare working-class parishes, whether urban or suburban, with middle-class parishes. Are there no non-Hispanic working-class parishes?

In their concluding chapter, the authors describe today's parish as a "vehicle both for experiencing the faith and for motivating Catholics to relate to the broader community and to shape it according to gospel values." It was, therefore, disappointing to find no data on the attitudes of core Catholics toward work or any information on the efforts of parishes to help Catholics work out the connections between faith and work. It is, after all, through their work that Catholics can have the greatest leverage on the mores and structures of American economic life. The peace and justice committees in which Gremillion and

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Castelli put so much stock may have their place but they are no substitute for programs geared to support Catholics in their vocations in the marketplace.

There are other tantalizing findings in *The Emerging Parish*: the melting away of traditional Catholic devotions; the large number of core Catholics who see salvation coming directly through Jesus apparently without the mediation of the church; and the large number of core Catholics who continue to hold to what Gremillion and Castelli regard as highly individualistic notions of their religion.

The Emerging Parish sheds enough light on the dynamics of parish life today to keep anyone interested in the church busy for a long time trying to piece together all the information and their interpretation. The total picture may elude, but all the elements are here. What makes it difficult to project the future is not knowing what are short-term and long-term trends. However, anyone responsible for parish life—pastor, staff, or lay volunteers—will find this book useful in strategizing for the future. In addition to presenting the findings of the Notre Dame study, Gremillion and Castelli provide two informative chapters—one on the regional history of the parish, the other on Hispanics and the parish community.

The Emerging Parish makes fascinating reading and it will provoke, not only because of its findings but also because of some of the authors' interpretations. It deserves widespread discussion throughout the entire Catholic community. All future surveys of Catholic life in the United States will undoubtedly use it as a benchmark. □

FAMILY VIOLENCE: THE RECORDS SPEAK

HEROES OF THEIR OWN LIVES
The Politics and History of Family Violence, Boston, 1880-1960
Linda Gordon
Viking, $24.95, 299 pp.

Mary Pellauer

Readers familiar with Linda Gordon's earlier work, on the history of birth control in America, will recognize the themes and style of *Heroes of Their Own Lives*, even through the very different subject matter. Gordon's work is path-breaking, combining new sources and feminist sensitivity, probing theory and care for evidence. High standards. *Heroes of Their Own Lives* meets them. Her creativity is emblematic of the best of feminist scholarship in the last two decades, asking new questions, looking for new directions, even in fields once thought "overplowed."

The questions animating this text are good examples. What is the history of family violence? Where would we look to find it? How do we understand what we find? How do we interpret the silences that remain? Just twenty years ago these were nonquestions. They can only be asked at all today because of the feminist movement's exposure of violence against women and children. Even to notice family violence required us to learn new perspectives, to perceive the world differently. It's yet another step to notice that family violence *has* a history.

The four meatiest chapters treat the specifics of child neglect, child physical abuse, incest, and wife-beating. Each is replete with descriptions of individual cases that make difficult but exciting reading. Such stories are always painful; the excitement comes from the way Gordon probes for theory in and through cases. She is explicit about the complications of this history. For instance, ironically, the sense of moral superiority of the upper-middle-class helpers (so unacceptable to people concerned about classism) is what made their agencies "more able to face the existence of problems—including sexual abuse of children and wife-beating—often considered *unmentionable*."

> *The critique of social control, both left and right, frequently points to the violation of civil liberties as evidence of the dangers of intervention into family privacy . . . Whose privacy? Whose liberties? The conception of liberties dominant in the nineteenth century was one of individual rights against the state, which was in fact an attribution of rights to heads of households.*
>
> —Linda Gordon
> *Heroes of Their Own Lives*

Before the present wave of activism, Gordon sees: (1) The late nineteenth century—when broader moral reform movements (temperance and feminism) influenced the treatment of family violence. (2) The Progressive era and its aftermath, 1910-1930 roughly, incorporated treatment of family violence work into professional social work, including the regularizing of casework notes and files. (3) The Depression, when economic hardship became more important than family violence to helping agencies. (4) The 1940s and 1950s when psychiatric categories dominated social casework interpretation of family violence, with predictably negative results for its victims.

Though this schema takes its bearings from the changing ideology of caseworkers, Gordon is exceptionally clear about the resourcefulness of survivors searching out the few avenues by which they might find help. Indeed, the valor and creativity of survivors is a continual theme of this treatment (hence the book's title). For instance,

> The child protection agencies originally tried to avoid intervention between husbands and wives, but their clients, mainly mothers, virtually dragged the child protectors into wife-beating problems. . . .Indeed throughout eighty years in which there were periods of strong professional disinclination to acknowledge the existence of

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wife-beating, battered women kept up a remarkably steady level of complaints to child-protection agencies.

Few nonhistorians would have thought to find such rich materials in the casework files of child protection agencies. The historian's creativity matches that of the subjects about whom she writes.

Social service providers, activists in shelters and crisis centers, survivors of family violence, people concerned about the state of "the" family, scholars, clergy—all ought to be reading this book, which has so much to tell us about the terms bequeathed to us by our predecessors in these areas. And like all good books, this one raises as many questions as it answers. The text is peppered with both insights and hypotheses. For instance,

> The 1930s were the divide in this study, after which the majority of women clients complained directly rather than indirectly about wife-beating. . . . This stimulates an economistic hypothesis: economic dependence prevented women's formulation of a sense of entitlement to protection against marital violence, but it also gave them a sense of entitlement to support; by contrast, the growth of a wage labor economy lessened women's sense of entitlement to support from their husbands but allowed them to insist on their physical integrity.

The conclusion, placing family violence at the center of tensions between the state and private rights in the twentieth century, is a succinct and powerful statement of issues. It so energetically clarified these debates that I will never listen to them again in the same way.

The one bone I would pick about the book is perhaps not with Gordon. References to religion of any kind are virtually non-existent. The stories of black women, Hispanic women, Asian women, poor white women, are passed through an utterly secular mesh—most probably that of the caseworkers who interviewed and recorded these otherwise revealing stories. □

SOCIALISM YES, MARX NO

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM
John C. Cort
Orbis, $24.95, $12.95 paper, 402 pp.

George Woodcock

Christian Socialism is an ambitious book, and largely fulfills its intent. John Cort has set out to reveal the sources and the record of a socialism based on Christian teachings, and so far as Western Europe and North America are concerned he has researched thoroughly, and presents his material in considerable detail, discussing famous and less known French and German, English and American advocates of Christian socialism, both Catholic and Protestant; he is particularly good on the Anglican roots of the movement in Britain. There are admirable accounts of figures who have long retreated into obscurity in the general history of socialism, like Philippe Buchez and Richard Ely, but whose place in the context of a religiously oriented political tradition remains important. And, though Cort's Catholic loyalties are never less than evident, he treats the Protestant leaders and activists with remarkable understanding, so that within its limitations his history is an admirably balanced one.

Indeed, it might seem out of place to talk of limitations in a book so broad in its scope and rich in its offerings. But, essentially, it is the tradition of Western Christianity of which Cort is writing. There is virtually nothing in his book about communistic or socialist tendencies in Eastern Christianity. Leo Tolstoy does not even appear in the index (though ironically Leon Trotsky does), and Nicholas Berdyaev is barely mentioned, though, to be fair, Cort is aware of this omission and apologizes for it in his Introduction. But there is no mention of the communistic if not strictly socialistic tendencies among Russian sectarians like the Doukhobors, which even spread into the West, where the Doukhobors established a most interesting community of six thousand people in the mountains of British Columbia, which is not even mentioned.

One searches equally in vain for any reference to Gandhi and the Gandhian movement which survived his death under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan. The sources of Gandhism were as much Christian as Hindu, and the vision Gandhi and his followers projected, of a society based on

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POEMS
Dixie Partridge

Her Listening: Autumn on 10th Street

With her walker
she moves to the bathroom,
combs through the permed strands—
a baroque halo in the bay light.
Tuesday. No one visits
on Tuesday.

Outside the thick window
boys on bikes skid
down the drive next door, turn
toward school voices
from sixty years back
calling from the wooden porches.

Plumbing gurgles
behind gray geraniums on wallpaper,
but she listens for the cat
that mewed all night from the walls.

Breakfast is something spooned from a can
in the Frigidaire, milk splashed
to a hobnail teacup.
A radio is playing in someone's
yard, a garbage truck
starts through the old sweet gum
neighborhood churns closer
stops churns closer.

at each wall with the walker
she leans and listens, moves,
turtle-like, to listen again until
at last she must sit.

on her lap each hand
holds a round of air
the shape of the stainless bars.
someone knocks twice
at the back door but

it's Tuesday
she's thinking *quiet*
so quiet all afternoon
she leans at the walls rests
leans again

for supper the cup of milk
and what's left in the can then
to the bedroom slowly
she changes to her nightgown
under her pillow puts out
the light now

hears clearly from her bed
the mewing in walls the first sound
she recalls hearing
since morning

Guide for September
for one wanting to leave

Ride up early
by bicycle to old Mr. Henson's lot
where a memory of phlox and flame-red
poppies still shouts down the hill.

Find the muted blue of delphinium
as a thrumming of crickets holds
through the quiet of your ride
and the smell of fallen crab apples
changes summer
into something patient.

Under poplars at the east fence,
pause to catch your breath
where plants secrete water beads
along leaf edges. Hope
for a glimpse of him bent at his work.

If he's not there, stand for these moments
to notice the long ranks of iris,
clipped close to earth, above each
a marker of grey aluminum:
row upon row, forty years of hybrids
from the patient laying on of hands.

Feel a celibate order in autumn
as you turn to wide sky
and coast down the hill, face open
to the stationary sun: the emblazoned gloss
in the memory of poppies.

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village communities holding their land in common, is at least in part derived from the Christian tradition of social concern.

Cort is almost sternly anti-Marxist, and though he brings Marx into his discussion, it is mainly to stress the more negative elements he derived from Judeo-Christian traditions. Because of what seems to him an unthinking acceptance of Marxist-Leninist doctrines of the class struggle and the dictatorship of the party disguised as the proletariat, Cort deals harshly (with some justification) with "liberation theology," which he sees as having little in common with the real democratic and liberationist urges in Christian Socialism.

Unfortunately, Cort's tendency to accept the popular identification of "communism" with Marxism robs him of a useful distinction in tracing the metamorphosis of early Christian communitarian tendencies into genuine socialism. Communism was originally conceived long before Marx and Engels laid claim to it in the *Communist Manifesto*, and originally it meant something far different from the rigid state apparatus, complete with secret police and Gulags, that we associate with modern Communist regimes. It really meant community of ownership, and could be on any scale, beginning with small intentional communities like that of the early disciples after Christ's death, and continuing in monastic orders and utopian experiments which often actually presumed a withdrawal from society, which is a much broader concept than community. Communism can apply to a village or even a group of like-minded sharers in a city; socialism embraces a whole nation, hence its familiar association with the concept of nationalization as state ownership.

It seems to me that in shying away from the term "communism," Cort has missed a useful distinction between the early Christian situation and that of the nineteenth century. Early Christians, in so far as they advocated sharing among believers, were genuine communists without being socialists; Christian Socialists from the nineteenth century on, trying to transform society and often to gain political influence in order to do so, were true socialists. The change involved a process of politicization, and very often it meant that the Christian content was diluted and elements of statism and class conflict entered into what had originally been movements inspired by Christian ethics.

> *The "spirit of Christian love" cannot be reduced to a political imperative, granted, but it most certainly has a political dimension. Feeding the hungry and clothing the naked are not precisely identical with a systematic redistribution of wealth, but in the present situation of gross inequality, obscene wealth, and wretched poverty, they most certainly cry to heaven for both systematic and unsystematic redistribution.*
>
> —*John C. Cort*
> Christian Socialism

A good example has been the Canadian movement originally called the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), which Cort briefly touches on and which developed largely out of the Social Gospel movement; two of its early leaders, J. S. Woodsworth and T. C. Douglas, were actually Protestant ministers. Political considerations, including the need to compromise with the trade unions, led the CCF to evolve from a movement largely under Christian inspiration into a mainline socialist party, the New Democratic Party. This party tends to see society in polar terms and to envisage a future in which the state will be in control of production and consumption. With less free cooperation, stress is put on the need for individuals and groups to control their tools and places of work. One now finds this view fairly common among Christian socialists.

Yet for all its limitations, and even without Tolstoy and Gandhi and Godwin, *Christian Socialism* is a readable and formidably useful book, devoted as it is to seeking ways by which the great moral forces of Christianity can be given their proper role in shaping a just, equitable, and workable society. □

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IN BRIEF

THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE AT A CROSSROADS, *edited by Lori F. Damrosch, Transnational Publishers, $67.50, 511 pp.*

In response to the decision of the World Court in late 1984 to hear Nicaragua's complaint against U.S. actions in support of the *contras*, the Reagan administration "walked out" of the Court hearing; second, on October 7, 1985, it revoked the commitment made in 1946 to accept limited compulsory jurisdiction in cases with nations likewise committed.

Before the United States revoked its commitment, the American Society of International Law created a study panel to research and consider the implications of the impending revocation signaled by the "walkout." Eighteen papers were commissioned to address the issues.

Although written almost entirely before the verdict (of June 26, 1986) on the merits in the *Nicaragua* case which upheld Nicaragua's complaint, the book affords a rich mine of material for use in public and political debate (would that there had been one!) on the issues raised by the World Court's ruling in the *Nicaragua* case.

While both sides are presented, the contentions that the Court should not have heard the *Nicaragua* case—because the UN Security Council had pre-empted the matter, or because the Court was incompetent to deal with disputes involving the use of force—do not stand up to the weight of scholarly judgment. Also demolished is the Reaganesque claim that self-defense is exempt from judicial review. The latter justification would set peace law back seventy-five years or more. (Even the U.S. judge on the Court did not share the U.S. government's position.)

The book also includes studies of the Court's past performance that, without claiming infallibility, refute the U.S. State Department's insinuations (or worse) of bias. Professor Edith Weiss of Georgetown Law School examines the character and competence of the judges over the years and her report should shame the Court's accusers.

It is not the Court but the United States which stands at the crossroads. Do we reject the role international adjudication plays in aiding peace? Is the rule of law to be reserved for minor matters only? Is the guardianship of peace to be handed over to superstatesmen, as Europe after Napoleon was policed by Metternich and Talleyrand? Is the world to be pacified by superpowers, as "Gorbymania" seems to suggest? HOWARD N. MEYER

A RENAISSANCE TAPESTRY: THE GONZAGA OF MANTUA. *By Kate Simon. Harper & Row, $22.50, 309 pp.*

Simon, best known for her European travel books and memoirs of growing up in the Bronx, digs, with this book, into the archives of four centuries of Mantua's ducal Gonzaga family. The title is accurate. She weaves a stunning tapestry of the age, one that compares favorably with Barbara Tuchman's "distant mirror" of fourteenth-century France. The lusty, larger-than-life Corradi family of Gonzaga, a village near Mantua, began their rise to power and fortune in 1328, when Luigi, the first captain (who lived to the age of ninety-two), seized Mantua from the then ruling Bonacolsis. Over the next two centuries, by shrewd management of estates, public works, and trade, by hiring out as *condottieri*, and by even shrewder marriages with the Este family of neighboring Ferrara (and eventually the Sforzas of Milan and the Medici of Florence), the success and brilliance of the Gonzaga court—in no small part due to redoubtable women like Isabella d'Este Gonzaga (1474-1539)—was celebrated and imitated throughout Europe.

About the piety of the time—St. Aloysius Gonzaga's downcast eyes or the fire in Savaronola's—Simon is mostly silent. But her fascinating narrative of family intrigue, mayhem, and art collecting is enriched by compact, descriptive essays on education; the humanist movement; syphilis; the state of medicine, theater, and the visual arts; the role of astrology, alchemy, and science; the position of women and Jews; and, not least, the bizarre affair of *La Prova*, the test, in public, of Duke Vincenzo I's "virile member" with a compliant (and well-paid) virgin before he could marry Eleonora de' Medici in 1583.

Capable Gonzaga women almost kept the story going well into the eighteenth century, but they were no match for the ineptitude of the last, sybaritic dukes and

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GEORGE WOODCOCK*'s books include* Thomas Merton: Monk and Poet, *and* The Crystal Spirit, *a study of George Orwell.*

HOWARD N. MEYER, *is the author of* The Amendment That Refused to Die, *a Pulitzer-nominated history of the 14th Amendment.*

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the politics of the devastating Thirty Years War. Having begun like medieval Donald Trumps, the tale ends, à la Andy Warhol, with a bonanza art sale.

After the aesthetic pleasures of Kate Simon, I found myself searching for more background and the deeper historical significance of Renaissance dynasts like the Gonzagas. I found it in the splendid essays (and illustrations) collected in Georges Duby's second volume of *A History of Private Life: Revelations of the Medieval World* (Harper & Row, $39.50, 650 pp.). Duby's essay on "The Emergence of the Individual" helps you understand that the Gonzaga legacy consists of more than the precious loot now displayed at the Louvre, Hampton Court, and New York's Metropolitan Museum.

D.T.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 514)

ing that some of the same questions are engaged by each. The issue of allocation, especially of very expensive and efficacious medical procedures, is a real problem and will almost certainly become more urgent. Mr. Callahan correctly notes that the idea of state funding of every medical possibility is a formula for disaster. This should not be confused with the question of active euthanasia, which Mr. Callahan wants to oppose. He undermines that purpose by defining artificial feeding and hydration as "medical treatment" which can be withdrawn in order to "let the patient die." But surely the decision is to terminate a life by letting the patient die of hunger and thirst. Contra Mr. Callahan, hunger and thirst are not the "underlying disease that brings that life to an end." It is a particularly ugly way to terminate a life. If the decision to terminate is admissible, neater and quicker means will be employed. Thus is the invitation offered to the active euthanasia that Mr. Callahan wants to oppose.

Rather than continuing to contribute to the conflation that he deplores, I hope that in his future work Mr. Callahan will make a "vital distinction" between the legitimate issue of allocation and the debate over euthanasia.

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS
The Center on Religion & Society

Politics of transplants

Emeryville, Calif.

To the Editors: Although Dan Callahan's article ["Vital Distinctions, Mortal Questions," July 15] is a valuable and lucid piece, I disagree with him in one important respect.

In his discussion of the allocation debate, he writes approvingly of state decisions, such as the Oregon case, which deny organ transplants to Medicaid recipients, even when they are life-saving. His rationale is that society cannot be held hostage to medical advances, and that other claims on the treasury may have precedence.

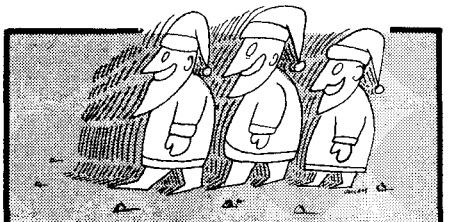
Callahan is taking his argument to an illogical extreme. Let us examine the Oregon case. During the year that state officials were denying a life-saving bone-marrow transplant to a young boy, they were also refunding a multi-million dollar surplus in the state's treasury to taxpayers. Did this refund, much of it to corporations and wealthy individuals, have a superior moral claim over a life-saving medical procedure, albeit an expensive one?

I have no quarrel with Callahan's argument that individuals in a permanent vegetative state should not necessarily have their medical care paid by the state. However, the denial of life-saving medical care by any state in this affluent America is invidious discrimination on the basis of wealth. It cannot be morally supported, and it is not good public policy.

THOMAS HIGGINS
Editor, *Healthweek*

The author replies:

It is true, as Mr. Higgins notes, that Oregon refused to pay for organ transplants in the face of a budget surplus (of $200 million). As I understand the matter, however, that money could not be spent on transplants (or any other purpose) because of a voter-imposed expenditure limit. As Dr. John Kitzhaber, a physician



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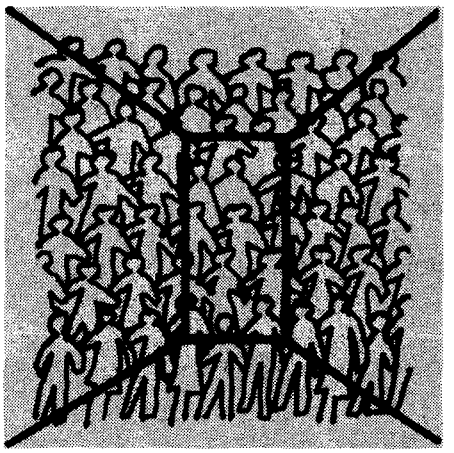

and president of the Oregon Senate noted (in the *Oregonian*, Nov. 29, 1987), "While some legislators . . . advocated the repeal of this limit . . . the proposal met with overwhelming opposition not only in the Legislature, but also from the public." Accordingly, it was decided to allocate funds to additional prenatal care rather than organ transplants. Was this a justifiable decision? In the context of a voter-established limit, I think it was reasonable to spend the money on prenatal care. The larger question seems to me two-fold: should voters establish hard-and-fast expenditure limits, and could it be reasonable, under some circumstances, to deny "life-saving medical care"? I believe the answer to the first part is no, and to the second yes. Even in an affluent country, to allow claims to life-saving care to take precedence over other legitimate social needs would not always be justifiable. If we do not admit (at least in principle) that this is possible, we will be held hostage to medical progress, which will find more and more expensive ways to keep us alive.

Contrary to Mr. Gaffney's position, my impression from the historical record of American health care is that what is initially available for the rich eventually comes to be given to the poor as well. There are plenty of exceptions to this generalization but, in the case for instance of organ transplants, it was originally the affluent who got them. Public and legislative outrage at that situation, however, eventually led many states to require their availability to all. That kind of pattern leaves us with a terrible problem: if (as both Mr. Higgins and Mr. Gaffney seem to imply) everyone should receive whatever lifesaving care the rich can get, then we will, of course, set the general level of care at an extraordinarily high level, one that will become increasingly insupportable. If, as an alternative, we decide to exclude from entitlement programs some therapies that the rich can buy, we set up a two-tier system. Neither is an attractive choice, but I suspect the latter would make more sense than the former.

I am a bit baffled by Pastor Neuhaus's letter. He was the signer of a prominent 1987 statement ("Feeding and Hydrating the Permanently Unconscious and Other Vulnerable Persons") which stated that "if it is really useless or excessively burdensome to provide someone with nutrition and hydration, then these means may rightly be withheld or withdrawn. . . ." There was no implication in that statement that this "is a particularly ugly way to terminate life" or that the doctor who made such a decision would be deliberately killing such a patient rather than (as I would judge the matter) allowing the patient to die from the underlying disease that created the inability to eat.

My article was saying no more than this: a *justifiable* decision to cease nutrition and hydration should not be classified as direct killing, but as allowing to die. I strongly emphasized that some such decisions could be wrong and thus morally culpable. But my main point was to distinguish between causality and culpability. I am not persuaded that it makes any sense to call the termination of artificially provided nutrition and hydration *causes* of death, however much it might be true that to do so would be morally culpable. Otherwise, we fall into the trap I mentioned, that of thinking we are such powerful creatures that our omissions become physical causes. We do not yet have that kind of power.

DANIEL CALLAHAN

AIDS & social policy

Greenville, N.C.

To the Editors: Dennis M. Doyle has seriously misrepresented my views in his article on "The Meaning of AIDS" [June 3]. The question I was addressing in my article, "The Punishment Concept of Disease," was whether *social policy* should take blame into consideration in the allocation of health care. I argued that it is dangerous to do so because we do not know well enough who is to blame for their illness, and because it would endanger promoting empathy from doctors and nurses to patients. Doyle seems to think blame and responsibility mean the same thing. They do not. For example, Mrs. Leary was responsible, but not to blame, for the fire that burned down Chicago when her cow kicked over a lantern. One may be responsible even when one is not at fault (as parents are for children and as supervisors or editors may be for their agents' handiwork). I say in my article that educational programs on AIDS and other illness are important and that people should take responsibility for their behavior. My point, however, is that we ought not to blame people for their illnesses, but take care of them in a compassionate and sympathetic way as best we can to the limit of our abilities and resources.

Thus, I reject Doyle's interpretation of my view. I *do* think we should discuss morality of behaviors and discuss the meaning of AIDS. I do thank him, however, for saying that I have pointed out the contradictions of the religious and secular versions of the punishment concept of disease.

LORETTA M. KOPELMAN
Chair, Department of
Medical Humanities
School of Medicine
East Carolina University

The author replies:

After a close rereading of Professor Kopelman's article, I stand by the brief remarks that I made. In question here is not whether Kopelman formally holds the position that the morality of AIDS-transmitting behaviors should not be discussed, but whether the overall thrust of her article devalues any such consideration.

What Kopelman claims in her letter differs from her article on at least three

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points. First, nowhere in her article does she directly say that people should take responsibility for their behavior; even if she did, however, such would hardly constitute an explicit discussion of the morality of behaviors such as drug abuse or casual sex. Second, in her article she discusses AIDS-education as a dimension of social health policy, not as an entirely separate category. Third, throughout her article she consistently, and without qualification, warns against the dangers of insinuating either responsibility or blame in the transmission of the disease, including in educational and preventive health contexts.

I do not at all intend to suggest that Kopelman self-consciously holds the absurd position that people should not take responsibility for their behavior or that the morality of AIDS-transmitting behaviors should not be discussed. What I am suggesting is that in her trenchant analysis of the contradictions inherent in the punishment concept of disease, she performs an overkill that becomes insensitive to the legitimate concerns of those with whom she disagrees. Kopelman's otherwise excellent article illustrates well my point that people in various parts of the spectrum need to be more aware of how their arguments might sound to those who do not share their presuppositions.

DENNIS M. DOYLE

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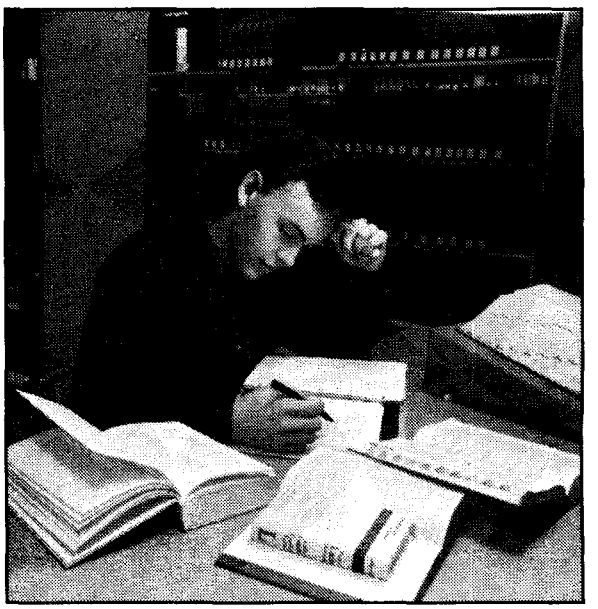

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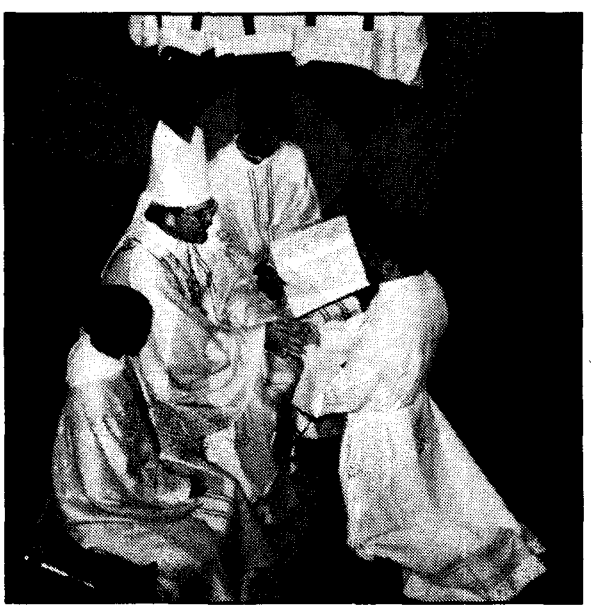

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